

Title of Session: Nuts About Nature - What Do YOU Want to Talk About?

Moderator: Bill Hilton Jr.

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BjB: Welcome to Nuts About Nature with Bill Hilton Jr.

NancyLai: Hello everyone

BjB: a reminder that if you're new to Tapped In, go to the ACTIONS menu and click on DETACH

BillHi: What no trumpet fanfare?

BjB blows the trumpets

BillHi: That's better.

BjB: we usually start discussions with introductions

DavidWe joined the room.

BillHi: Now we can start.

BjB: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a Bill Hilton groupie

MiguelB: Mike from San Antonio Texas secondary US History teacher

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler, a sometimes rambunctious Tapped In user from New Jersey

BillHi: Your specialty, David?

DavidWe: dessert?

NancyLai: I'm a grad student in Ed. Tech. from San Diego State

BjB groans

DavidWe: I lead a math and technology discussion in Tapped In

BillHi: (Ignore him BJ)

BjB ignores David

BillHi: That's better.

BillHi: Did Susan wander away?

DavidWe . o O (for the past 7 minutes, yes)

BillHi: Okay. I'll start.

BillHi: I'm Bill Hilton Jr., executive director of Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History in York, South Carolina.

BjB: Sue is a substitute teacher in Canada and leads the Tapped In K-3+ Resources discussions

BillHi: I taught high school and college biology for about 20 years and also travel the country giving talks about natural history topics and doing inservice and preservice teacher training.

BillHi: "Nuts About Nature" is a discussion aimed at helping teachers (and future teachers) use the out-of-doors--either for real or virtually--to excite students about learning science and other disciplines.

BillHi: Each month I select a topic for discussion that is intended to make you think and, in the end, to give you some ideas for implementing activities with your current (or future) students.

BillHi: Thanks, first, to BJ for facilitating as always. BJ has been crowned the "Queen of Multitasking."

BillHi: Now I'll bet you'd like to know what we're gonna talk about--since I was remiss in not providing a topic for this month.

BillHi: My topic is "What Do YOU Want to Talk About?"

BillHi: Let's limit it to environmental education and natural history.

BillHi: Mike had a question to start.

BillHi: It was about hummingbird feeders and bees.

BillHi: Mike, want to re-post the query?

MiguelB: Yes...I have a hummingbird feeder in my back yard but no takers yet.

BillHi: Except for . . .

MiguelB: Except for bees and would you believe...I saw a bird trying to dip his beak in there.

BillHi: First of all, we need to remember if we put out 4:1 sugar water for hummingbirds, we're gonna attract other things that like sweet stuff.

BillHi: (David says he likes dessert.)

MiguelB: Well the instructions said 50 50

BillHi: That's too strong.

NancyLai: I keep a hummingbird feeder too. If the birds don't come back after they've tasted the solution, does that mean they don't like it?

BillHi: Most nectar flowers come in at about 20-25% sugar.

MiguelB: Okay...then I need to adjust the strength

BillHi: That might help, because higher concentrations spoil quicker.

BillHi: How fresh is your mix?

NancyLai: a month old

MiguelB: I just put it up around a month ago...

BillHi: I think I'm going to swoon

BillHi: Sugar water mix begins to spoil almost as soon as you put it in the feeder.

BjB . o O (can I groan now?)

DavidWe wonders what he did, NOW

BillHi: In warm weather (above 70 degrees F), you need to change the mix at least twice a week.

MiguelB: Okay...time for a change.

BillHi: Bees and yellow jackets love the mix when it spoils because it smells like rotten fruit to them.

BillHi: is your feeder in the shade or the sun?

MiguelB: Mine is in both...shade during the mornings and sun during the hot afternoons

NancyLai: mine too.....it hangs from the ceiling of my balcony

BillHi: You might move it if possible. The mix won't spoil as fast, plus bees seem to go more to feeders in sunny areas.

BillHi: Shall we stroll over to my Web site for "Operation RubyThroat: The Hummingbird Project"?

MiguelB: Well then a change in location also

BillHi: Yea or nay?

MiguelB: Go for it

NancyLai: yes please

DavidWe: Bill has a great web site

BillHi: Okay, click on <http://www.rubythroat.org>

BillHi: Stop when you get to the main page that comes up.

BillHi: David, I don't know if you've been to this one.

BillHi: Everybody on the page with the little girl and the stuffed hummingbird?

MiguelB: I think I came in there but not lately

NancyLai: yes

DavidWe: I think I have, but certainly not in the past few weeks

DavidWe knows Bill is fond of colored text on his web page

BillHi: I am proud to say this site has had almost 4,000 hits on the main page since last Monday.

DavidWe congratulates Bill

DavidWe is impressed Bill knows how to take so many hits

BillHi: Okay, everybody click on the rotating arrow that points at Enter Main Site.

BjB . o O (on my wish list is a trip to Costa Rica)

BillHi: That takes you to what is essentially the table of Contents.

DavidWe will help drive Bj to Costa Rica

BillHi: Scroll down the left-hand column to the box that says "Attracting and Feeding Hummingbirds" and click on it.

BillHi: If you miss it, it's at <http://www.rubythroat.org/AttractingMain.html>

BillHi: Got it, Mike & Nancy?

NancyLai: yes

MiguelB: yes

BillHi: Good. Notice the only real link is to "Landscaping for Hummingbirds."

BillHi: That's because feeders are just ONE way to attract hummers.

BillHi: Click on the link.

BillHi: Now you're on the Landscaping for Hummingbird page.

BillHi: And from this page there are THREE links--Water, Shelter & Space, and Food.

BillHi: That's because these are the three main elements you need for hummers (or anything else, for that matter.)

BillHi: I intentionally set these pages so people would have to think about all this before they got to the next link.

BillHi: Click on the link for Food--Natural or Otherwise.

BillHi: That takes you to <http://www.rubythroat.org/FoodMain.html>

BillHi: Now we have a choice between looking at Native Hummingbird Plants or Exotic ones.

BillHi: Or of thinking about feeders.

BillHi: Click on Hummingbird feeders, and you'll get to <http://www.rubythroat.org/FeedersMain.html>

BillHi: There's a bunch of verbiage here--including winter hummer feeding--and some photos of different feeders.

BillHi: But I really want you to click on the link to "Hummingbird Feeder Hints" that takes you to <http://www.rubythroat.org/FeedingHintsMain.html>

BillHi: Everybody there?

NancyLai: yes

BillHi: Mike?

MiguelB: Yes I was reading the information

BillHi: Thanks. (-: Anyway, you might want to bookmark this page, since it has tons of hints for how to maintain hummingbird feeders.

MiguelB: Yes it does...

BillHi: And the answer to Mike's original question is at one of the links at the bottom of this page, namely "Bees and Ants at feeders"

BillHi: That's at <http://www.rubythroat.org/FeedersBeesAndAnts.html>

MiguelB: Yes I saw it.

BillHi: Okay, then, that takes care of the first question. (-:

BillHi: Anyone have another one?

MiguelB: sure does

BillHi: Any nature or environmental ed topic is fair game.

MiguelB: Amazing I have fishing line holding up my bird feeder....squirrels were getting to it...

MiguelB: Now no more squirrels...even though I have a family of them.

BillHi: Squirrels are pretty interesting creatures.

BillHi: They are all born with Ph.D.s in engineering.

MiguelB: yes they are....my community loves to play with my pet Chihuahuas...

BjB laughs...you got that right!

BillHi: Soon squirrels will be inventing dynamite.

BillHi: So they can get into those so-called "squirrel-proof" feeders.

BillHi: Questions?

MiguelB: I had a bird feeder up and all of a sudden the squirrels were eating more than the birds....I tried greasing the pole...and it didn't work...so now I have it hanging from fishing line...and that has worked.

BillHi: Good. I'm surprised they haven't just chewed through the monofilament.

BjB: o O (yet)

BillHi: Isn't someone in this group tonight from Texas?

MiguelB: Well what I did was I got a piece of fish holding mono and have it in the upper part of the tree and then the 40 lb fishing line at the bottom.

MiguelB: I am

BillHi: Oh, then I have a question of you.

MiguelB: Okay

BillHi: What do you think of when I say "longhorn."

MiguelB: Texas....U

MiguelB: Beevo

BillHi: Nancy, how 'bout you?

NancyLai: the horns of a bull

BjB: I think of a longhorn steer

BillHi: Beevo?

MiguelB: The U T mascot.

BillHi: Is "Beevo" short for something?

MiguelB: I really don't know...that is the mascot's name

MiguelB: Never looked into it...

BillHi: Okay. Anyway, you have all shown a kind of bias about what "longhorn" means.

BillHi: (I think it's also a brand of beer, but forget that.)

BjB: <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/german/bevo.html>

MiguelB: That's right its bevo...one e

BjB: read the article

BillHi: Okay, I'll look at that link later, if I may.

BillHi: I have my own bias. When I hear "longhorn," I think about insects.

BillHi: Anybody know what I mean?

MiguelB: Insects?

BillHi: Si.

RoseAH joined the room.

BjB: Hi, Rose

MiguelB: Hello Rose

BillHi: If everyone is game, I'd like to lead you to my NEXT Web site (I have three altogether).

RoseAH: Hi everyone!

MiguelB: Go for it

RoseAH: fine

BjB would like to learn more about longhorns and insects

BillHi: It's the one for Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History, my organization in York SC.

BillHi: Click on <http://www.hiltonpond.org>

BillHi: Bookmark this main page for future reference, please. (-:

BillHi: But I really want you to go to an interior page. it's <http://www.hiltonpond.org/ThisWeek0507015.html>

BillHi: Now HERE'S a REAL Longhorn.

BjB: cool!

BjB: are the 'horns' antenna?

BillHi: Yes, BJ, the horns are antennae, and they're longer in male beetles.

BillHi: Long-horned Beetles are a whole family of beetles.

MiguelB: I thought of that when you said insects...

BillHi: Good.

BillHi: I like beetles. A lot.

RoseAH: This insect is really scary looking

MiguelB: But I was thinking of another form of insect...don't recollect its name though

BillHi: Did you see how big it is?

BillHi: The beetle it self is only three-fourths of an inch long.

BillHi: The photo on your screen should be about four times life size.

BillHi: I do one of these photo essays every week.

BjB puts in a plug for Bill's excellent photos on his websites

BillHi: A lot of teachers use them for enrichment and as resources. You'll see that this installment is #278, so I've covered LOTS of topics.

BillHi: Every page on the site has a search engine box, so you often can find stuff about nature topics without going elsewhere on the Web.

RoseAH: I have done paragraph writing with 2nd grades using nature pictures as a story starter

BillHi: By all means steer them to my Web site photos. (-:

RoseAH: That's great, I'm always looking for new pictures to use in class for discussion or writing assignments

BjB: I recommend Bill's newsletters, Rose

RoseAH: How do I get that

BillHi: Send a blank e-mail to <mailto:thisweek@hiltonpond.org> with SUBSCRIBE in the Subject line.

BillHi: It's free and non-fattening.

BjB: Looks like our time is about up, Bill.

RoseAH: Hey that sounds just what I'm looking for:)

BjB: any last comments from anyone?

BillHi: Perfect timing, as always. (-:

RoseAH: Looks like I got on the end of the discussion again

MiguelB: Very informative...first time here.

NancyLai: thanks for showing us your website.

BjB: A reminder that Bill has an Environmental Education group in Tapped In

RoseAH: yes, thanks for the website info

BillHi: Come back next month when we have some college students in the room.

MiguelB: Yes thank you very much...will talk to science people and see if I can get them to come into your site.

BillHi: I'm pleased to share and am happy you liked them.

BjB: Thanks, Bill.

BillHi: Again Hilton Pond Center for Piedmont Natural History is at <http://www.hiltonpond.org>

BillHi: and

RoseAH: waves and says see you next month

BillHi: "Operation RubyThroat: The Hummingbird Project" is at <http://www.rubythroat.org>

SusanR: Thanks Bill

BillHi: She's ALIVE!

MiguelB: Thank you Bill and Bj you did your great job again...

RoseAH: I bookmarked this site

BjB waves goodnight

BillHi: Great. See you all soon, I hope.