



The Texas Sage

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter
Vol. 12 No. 7
July 2000

President's Corner . . .

For those of you not at our last club meeting ... Howard Garrett is great on the radio, but he's even better in person!

We were presented with an overview of "The Organic Program" in a way everyone could understand. Howard also included enough detailed scientific explanations to justify his success and instill

confidence in us to get started on our own programs.

I especially liked the slides of the experiments using a variety of soils, additives and mulches. A picture is worth a thousand words. For those members who have started changing to organics, let the rest of us know about your successes by sharing

them with our editor or at our next club meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, July 6 at the usual time (7pm). John Davis, who's always an entertaining speaker, will give us landscape design tips to attract backyard wildlife.

- Glen Nerwin

Welcome our new
subscriber:

Allison Hubbs

We Want Your Photos!

Ev Woodrey, our chapter historian, needs your help!

She is looking for newspaper articles about our chapter and photos of our chapter projects and events.

We would like to have copies of these photographs and articles for our chapter archives. They may also be used for displays to show people what our chapter has accomplished and what the Native Plant Society is all about.

Ev is especially interested in photos of the Hulen Library Demonstration Garden. Surely somebody took a break from their hard work to snap a picture! If you worked on the garden and have photos or you know of someone who may have taken photos, please call Ev at 295-4683.

- Debbie Fierros

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What's Happening . . .

Thursday, July 6 **7:00 PM** **Fort Worth Botanical Garden**
North Central Chapter meeting. John Davis, Texas Parks & Wildlife Urban Biologist for Fort Worth, will give us landscape design tips for backyard wildlife. John's presentations are always informative and entertaining, so plan on attending!

Saturday, July 8 **8:00 AM** **Veterans Park Wildscape, Arlington**
 The monthly workday at the Veterans Park Wildscape will be held on July 8th. (The first Saturday of the month falls on a holiday weekend this month so the workday will be moved to the second Saturday.) Friday Wildscape Workdays begin at 8 am every Friday. If you would like more information, contact Molly Hollar at (817) 860-5580 or Mike McCorkhill at (817) 465-0763.

Saturday & Sunday, July 15-16 **8:00 AM-4:00PM & Sat. eve.** **Various Metroplex Locations**
 The Pond Tour 2000, presented by The North Texas Water Garden Society, will feature 85 ponds in 31 metroplex cities. On Saturday the tour hours will be 8:00am to 4:00pm and 8:00pm to midnight. On Sunday the tour sites will be open from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Pond Tour books are available for \$10 each at the gardening and pond centers listed below. For more information call the tour hotline at (972)994-1140 (voicemail).

Cedar Hill	Kings Creek Gardens	Garland	Creative Water Gardens
Colleyville	Yard Art		Kingsley Creative Water Gardens
Corinth	Water Gardens Unlimited		Baber's Creative Printing
Dallas	Water Gardens Galore	McKinney	Greenhouse Gardens
	North Haven Garden	Mesquite	Dickson Brothers
	Sticks & Stones Garden Market	N.R.H.	Green Mama's
	Custom Stone Supply	Rowlett	Aquatic Creations
	Wild Birds Unlimited	Waxahachie	The Greenery
	Cheshire Stone	Wylie	Jamars Water Gardens
	Aubrey's Barber Shop		Classy Koi Ponds
DeSoto	Aqua Tan Pools		

Monday, July 17 **7:00 PM** **Fort Worth Botanic Gardens**
 The Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Chapter monthly meeting will feature Dora Sylvester who will discuss plant taxonomy. This talk will be a short version of the plant identification course that Dora has taught at the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge.

Monday, July 24 **7:30 PM** **Arlington Community Center, Vandergriff Park**
 The Arlington Organic Garden Club presents Jay Mertz, owner of Rabbit Hill Farm, speaking on preparing garden soil for a fall garden.

Sunday, July 30 **2:00-4:00 PM** **Fort Worth Botanical Garden**
 Members of the Tarrant County Butterfly Society will be available to identify butterflies in the Trial Gardens at the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens from 2 to 4 pm on the last Sunday of each month through October. This service will be offered to acquaint the public with local butterflies and to provide information on butterfly gardening in the area. For more information please call Joann Karges, President of the Tarrant County Butterfly Society at 923-8474.

Controlling Insects in the Garden

Since man first began to grow plants for food and for beauty, he has attempted to control the pests that thwart his efforts. Some of the solutions, all organic of course, are quite strange. Pliny (24-79 A.D.) advised a deterrent to caterpillars - a crayfish hanging in the garden. He also recommended an insecticide - the skull of a female horse or ass mounted on a stake in the garden. Other suggestions included plants such as hellebore, squill, hemlock (!), and rhododaphne to deter insects, some of which are probably still used for the same purpose.

Not much less preposterous have been some 20th century attempts, even those of biological control. One of the more recent of these was the USDA's importation of a beetle, the flower-weevil, to control the spread of alien thistle in Nebraska. Unfortunately this seed-eating insect is also consuming the seeds of endangered native thistles. The Argentine cactus caterpillar was used to control cactus in the Caribbean islands and now has spread to Florida, endangering rare native cactus there and threatening to spread westward. This type of biological control has frequently led to additional problems.

Insect control is complex; there are no simple solutions. Gardeners who are interested in protecting wildlife and ground water will not use products that contain diazinon, bendiocarb, or chlorpyrifos which are present in many

commercial products (read the labels, always in tiny print). Instead they will use in so far as possible organic controls: ladybugs, lacewings, mantids, pyrethrum, rotenone, and superior oils. The use of the bacterium Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) for caterpillar control should be cautious, as it can also kill butterflies. Specific Bt's are available for specific pests and should be so used.

Organic pesticides such as garlic tea, ground cinnamon, citrus oils, compost tea (recommended by Gail Morris and Howard Garrett) are among those that are effective, but even some of these can be harmful to beneficial insects as well as noxious ones. Natural deterrents include plantings of garlic, fetid marigolds, and nasturtiums around and among the garden plants. My personal solution for insect control is feeding birds all year; the birds come to the garden for food and take grubs, grasshoppers, caterpillars, and other insects – definitely worth the price of the bird seed.

- Joann Karges

Treasurer's Report

by Jean-Marie Smith

Balance (5/16/00)	\$1,536.64
Deposits (newsletter subscriptions)	\$ 10.00
Expenditures (program, mulch for Hulen, room rental, bank fees, website renewal)	[\$ 153.50]

Balance (6/20/00)	\$1,393.14

Veterans Park Wildscape News

Come visit the Wildscape in July to see all the wonderful changes that took place at the end of June. On Good Turn Day (June 23), Northrup-Grumman employees and other volunteers installed two new bridges, a pavilion, 120 feet of boardwalk, 5 kiosks, 10 benches, over 20 directional signs and 3 acres of new plantings (all native of course).

- Molly Hollar

Native Plant Society of Texas,
North Central Chapter
Debbie Fierros, Editor
1017 Usher St.
Benbrook, TX 76126

Next Meeting:
Thursday, July 6th at 7PM
at FW Botanical Garden

Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

As a member of the state organization, you will receive an annual subscription to the *NPSOT News*, and you will be invited to attend the NPSOT Annual Symposium.

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Jean-Marie Smith, Treasurer
720 Highland Dr.
Arlington, TX 76010

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Glen Nerwin, President
(817) 281-5991

For changes of address or
information about contributing to
the newsletter, please contact:

Debbie Fierros, Editor
The Texas Sage
1017 Usher St.
Ft. Worth, TX 76126
(817) 249-3241

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