



The Texas Sage

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter

Vol. 12 No. 6

June 2000

Editor's Note . . .

At our last meeting we enjoyed a wonderful presentation by Evonne Sandas, Arlington Golf Operations Superintendent. She showed us slides of the Tierra Verde Golf Course during the construction phase, when they were carefully building the course while trying to save as much natural habitat as possible. Tierra Verde is one of only eighteen golf courses in the country that is part of the Audobon Signature Program, which promotes environmentally friendly golf courses. Evonne told us about the obstacles she faced, but her perseverance has paid off. Tierra Verde has preserved considerably more native habitat than it has destroyed, and the golf course is home to a diverse wildlife population, as we saw in the slides. The course was landscaped with native plants, the facilities conserve water, and pesticide and herbicide use is minimal. Thank you Evonne for your presentation, thank you for preserving a precious piece of nature, and thank you for creating a wonderful example

of how development and natural habitat can co-exist.

You may have noticed by now that your newsletter is a little thinner this month. Or maybe you noticed that it came a little earlier than usual. The newsletter is only four pages this month so that I could get it in the mail ASAP. Why? So I could tell you who our special speaker is going to be in June, and so you would have time to invite all your friends ... because they'll all want to be there. So with out further ado, next months guest speaker will be none other than ... (drumroll please) ...

Howard Garrett, landscape architect, organic horticulturist and respected authority on organic growing methods.

He's the author of several books on organic gardening, he writes a weekly column for the Dallas Morning News, and he hosts a radio talk show called "The Natural Way" on WBAP 820 (Saturdays at 11:00am). Howard will speak about - you guessed it - organic gardening. I hope to see you all on June 1st.

Debbie Fierros

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Treasurer's Report

by Jean-Marie Smith

Balance (4/19/00)	\$1,643.96
Deposits (newsletter subscriptions, raffle)	\$ 57.00
Expenditures (program, newsletter expenses, room rental, bank fee)	[\$164.32]
Balance (5/16/00)	\$1,536.64

Grass Lawns – The Humor of it All

[This humorous story has been circulating in email for the last six months. I'm unable to give credit where it's due, because I have no idea who the author is.]

"Winterize your lawn", the big sign outside the garden store commanded. I've fed it, watered it, mowed it, raked it and watched a lot of it die anyway. Now I'm supposed to winterize it? I hope it's too late. Grass lawns have to be the stupidest thing we've come up with outside of thong swimsuits! We constantly battle dandelions, Queen Anne's lace, thistle, violets, chicory and clover that thrive naturally, so we can grow grass that must be nursed through an annual four-step chemical dependency.

Imagine the conversation The Creator might have with St. Francis about this:

"Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there in the Midwest? What happened to the dandelions, violets, thistle and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect, no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracted butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But all I see are these green rectangles."

"It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers "weeds" and went to great extent to kill them and replace them with grass."

"Grass? But it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's temperamental with temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?"

"Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn."

"The spring rains and cool weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy."

"Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it – sometimes twice a week."

"They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?"

"Not exactly. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags."

"They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?"

"No, sir. Just the opposite. They pay to throw it away."

"Now let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?"

"Yes, sir."

"These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work."

"You aren't going to believe this Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it."

"What nonsense! At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. Plus, as they rot, the leaves form compost to enhance the soil. It's a natural circle of life."

"You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and have them hauled away."

"No! What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter and keep the soil moist and loose?"

"After throwing away your leaves, they go out and buy something they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of leaves."

"And where do they get this mulch?"

"They cut down trees and grind them up."

"Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. Saint Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?"

"Dumb and Dumber, Lord. It's a real stupid movie about ..."

"Never mind, I think I just heard the whole story."

- Unknown

What's Happening . . .

Thursday, May 25

7:00 PM

University of North Texas, Denton

The Trinity Forks Chapter of the NPSOT will feature a slide show on "Wild Orchids of Texas" presented by Joe Liggio, the author and photographer of the newly released book on Texas orchids. The meeting will be in Denton at the new Environmental Center at the University of North Texas on the corner of Avenue C and Hickory. Guests are welcome and admission is free.

Thursday, June 1

7:00 PM

Fort Worth Botanical Garden

Our North Central Chapter meeting for June will feature our special guest speaker . . .

Howard Garrett, the well known author, radio talk show host, landscape architect, and organic gardening guru. Howard will talk to us about 'Organic Gardening and Native Plants'. Tell your friends and neighbors! They won't want to miss this meeting!

Saturday, June 3

9:00 AM - NOON

Veterans Park, Arlington

The monthly workday at the Veterans Park Wildscape will be held on Saturday, June 3. Please note that we're back to working in the mornings now that the weather has warmed up. Weekly maintenance is also performed every Friday morning. If you would like more information, contact Molly Hollar at (817) 860-5580 or Mike McCorkhill at (817) 465-0763.

Saturday, June 10

9:00 AM

Lake Ray Roberts, Denton

Our June fieldtrip will be a walk along the recently opened Greenbelt Trail on the Elm Fork of the Trinity River. The trail is north of the metroplex. It runs from below Ray Roberts Lake in Denton, to Lake Lewisville. This trail winds through a beautiful hardwood riverbottom forest. To reach the trailhead, drive north of Denton on I-35W to FM 455 at the Sanger exit. Turn right and go east across the lake. Turn right on the first road after you cross the dam. Meet in the parking lot for the trailhead. The fieldtrip will last 3-4 hours. For more information contact Jeff Quayle at (817)738-1322, (817)729-0283, or prairies@tx.freei.net

Saturday, June 24

9:00 AM-3:30 PM

Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge

The Fort Worth Nature Center will present a workshop on Odonates...more commonly known as dragonflies and damselflies. The workshop costs \$15 per person (\$10 for Friends of the Nature Center). Call the Nature Center at (817)237-1111 to register. Be sure to bring a sack lunch, water, binoculars and wear field-appropriate clothing.

Saturday, June 24

9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Arlington Community Center, Vandergriff Park

The Natural Urban Living Garden Show will feature top notch speakers, demonstrations, vendor booths, plant sales and raffle drawings. The speakers include John Davis ('Urbanization and the Wildlife Response'), John Snowden ('Native Grasses in the Landscape'), Rosa Finsley ('Wildscape at Veterans Park'), and Howard Garrett ('Urban Living the Natural Way'). The Arlington Community Center is at 2800 S. Center Street in Arlington.

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Next Meeting:

Thursday, June 1st 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.

Memberships :	___ Individual	\$20
	___ Family	\$25
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Check here if this is a membership renewal

Make check payable to NPSOT and mail this form and check to:
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P.O. Box 891
Georgetown, TX 78627

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