



The Texas Sage

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter
Vol. 12 No. 9
September 2000

President's Corner . . .

[*This month's article was written by Debbie Fierros, North Central Chapter Newsletter Editor*]

At the August meeting we were treated to an entertaining talk on the use of wildflowers in landscapes, presented to us by Jane Bartosiewicz, a Master Naturalist and Master Gardener.

Jane showed us some beautiful slides of wildflowers that she had photographed herself. She wanted to move through the slides quickly to show us the variety of colors and textures of wildflowers, but we made her stop and talk about every slide so we could absorb all the details.

When preparing a turf site to plant wildflower seeds, Jane suggests scalping the grass several weeks in a row to kill it.

She advised against solarizing the area with plastic (because it sterilizes the soil) and against tilling the area (because it encourages unwanted seeds buried in the soil).

Wildflower seeds need water to sprout, grow and bloom. So if Mother Nature doesn't provide rain, plan on watering your plants or you'll have disappointing results when trying to start your wildflower patch.

If you have neighbors who don't appreciate the 'natural' look of a wildflower garden, put a border around the wildflowers to tidy it up. Don't let the flowers overflow onto public sidewalks and city streets. Keeping an area of mowed turf around the 'wild' area makes a nice contrast and should satisfy the more traditional neighbors.

Thank you Jane for that wonderful talk.

Over the next few months we have some more exciting speakers and events. In September Dr. Bruce Benz will talk to us about the structure and ecology of the Tandy Hills prairie and other sites in this area. On October 7th we will host a garden tour. The tour will include many of the wonderful gardens we saw last year, plus our demonstration gardens. However this year we will open the tour to the public as a chapter fund raiser. October 19-22 are the dates of the NPSOT symposium in Denton. In November we will have our annual native plant exchange and in December Randy Weston will talk about cottage gardens – Texas style.

- Debbie Fierros

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Symposium Silent Auction

NPSOT Symposium 2000 in Denton will have a silent auction. Georgia Prakash, NPSOT President, is asking all members to bring items (or send them with a friend if you're not going) to the event. There will be more information about the auction in the President's Message in the September/October issue of *NPSOT News*.

Granbury Road Demonstration Garden News

Another successful and rewarding workday was completed by the Granbury Road Raiders on July 23. After two workdays in July, the garden has been trimmed, weeded and well cared for.

These are the dedicated and hardworking volunteers that have maintained the garden and keep coming back:

Susan Higgins
Gale Cupp
Beth Schimian
Judith Sear
Mike Woodrey
Victoria Neal

There is much to learn when tending to a native garden and everyone is invited to participate in the next work day September 2 from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon. Come join the Granbury Road Raiders in keeping the garden looking it's best!

The Annual Native Garden Tour will take place October 7th. The garden very much needs a replacement cover of mulch which will be ordered and delivered in time for spreading September 9. Please call Helena (244-5338) to let her know you can assist. This is a BIG job which needs the support of the group. Bring wheel barrows, rakes, and brooms. We will start at 8:00 am and work until we are finished.

A few plants have expired and Michael Woodrey and Stephen Hayden are assisting in the plant recommendations and replacement. Another work day will be required to plant and get ready for the tour.

A very sincere thanks to all who have helped over the past several months.

- Helena van Heiningen

Welcome to our new subscribers!

Elaine Couch
Joe & Carolyn McHaney

Treasurer's Report

by Jean-Marie Smith

Balance (7/20/00)	\$1,105.74
Deposits (raffle, newsletter subscriptions)	\$ 30.00
Expenditures (room rental, bank fees, program, newsletter)	[\$ 258.39]
	—————
Balance (8/21/00)	\$877.35

What's Happening . . . (cont'd)

Saturday, October 7

Fort Worth, North Richland Hills, and other areas

Our chapter will host a fall Garden Tour of landscapes using native plants. The gardens to be toured will include members' homes and our chapter's demonstration gardens.

Thursday-Sunday, October 19-22

University of North Texas, Denton

The Native Plant Society of Texas Annual Symposium

Thursday, October 19 – There will be pre-conference field trips.

Tour the Noble Foundation's Coffey Ranch (10:00-2:00 not including travel time) or take the Denton Greenbelt Kayak tour (8:00-4:00).

Friday, October 20 – You may attend two of the six exciting workshops planned, or you can go on a field trip (or both if the schedule permits). Select one of the three workshops offered in the morning (10:00-12:00) and/or one of the three in the afternoon (2:00-4:00). Morning workshops include:

“Collecting and Preserving Botanical Specimens”,
 “Landscaping on Sandy Acidic Cross Timbers Soils”, and
 “Working the Political System to Save Our Native Plants”.

Afternoon workshops include:

“Plant Sale Primer”,
 “Landscaping on Clay, Caliche or Limestone Soils”, and
 “Key Elements of Tree Preservation Ordinances”.

Fieldtrips include:

tour of the Benny Simpson Native Plant Landscape Beds in N. Dallas (2:00-3:30);
 two stop tour to LLELA and LAERF in Lewisville (12:30-4:00); or
 three stop tour of BRIT, the Lasater residence landscape, and the Wildscape at Veterans Park (9:45-3:00).

Saturday, October 21 – Symposium papers will be presented.

Sunday, October 22 – Choose from more exciting field trips to

Fort Worth Nature Center (9:00-4:00);
 Lake Mineral Wells State Park (9:00-4:00);
 LBJ Grasslands (9:00-12:00);
 Cedar Hill State Park, Kings Creek Gardens, and the Dallas Nature Center (9:00-4:00),
 Stella Rowan Wilderness Remnant Prairie (9:30-11:30); or
 Hugh Garnett Preserve (9:00-11:00)

**For more information see the latest issue of *NPSOT News* or visit the website at www.npsot.org.
 There will be copies of the schedule and registration form at our September chapter meeting.**

Thursday, November 2

7:00 PM

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

North Central Chapter meeting. Annual native plant exchange.

Thursday, December 7

7:00 PM

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

North Central Chapter meeting. Randy Weston will make a presentation on “Cottage Gardens – Texas Style”.

The Trees of Butterflies

In the caterpillar stage of their lives almost all butterflies and moths are herbivores, the exception among North American species being the Harvester, a butterfly whose carnivorous larvae consume woolly aphids (and more power to them!). Most of them are nourished on herbs and grasses, but there are many others that eat only tree leaves, and these are the ones I would like to tell you about.

First, I must explain that with few exceptions butterflies and many moths are host-specific, that is, the female will lay her eggs only on specific plants (or those in a certain family) and caterpillars will consume only that kind of plant. The female is pre-programmed to find that plant which she does by smell, by sight, and by touching with her feet. These are then the larval host plants.

Hackberry trees are among our most common trees, and on them grow four of our native butterflies: the Questionmark, the Hackberry Emperor, the Tawny Emperor, and the Snout Butterfly. Elm is in the same family and may be used alternately, but usually we find these caterpillars on hackberry,

where they mature, spin their chrysalids, and emerge to start the whole cycle again.

Oaks are abundant, too, and apparently the plant secondary chemistry is similar in all species of oaks, as those butterflies and moths that use oak as their larval hosts will accept any of them. The spectacular California Sister may be making a comeback in our area; it will most often be found near oaks. There are several hairstreaks, small butterflies of the group known as "gossamer-wings" that also use only oak: the Banded Hairstreak, the White M-album, and the Northern Hairstreak. Horace's Duskywing, a dark, fairly large spread-wing skipper, and the similar Juvenal's Duskywing caterpillar will fold an oak leaf, glue the edges together, and eat the leaf in the privacy of its shelter. In addition to the butterflies, some of our largest and most striking moths use only oak: the Imperial, the Polyphemus, the Waved Sphinx Moth, and several of the underwing moths.

Pecan trees host more moth larvae than butterflies: several hawkmoths and at least four species of underwing moths.

Soapberry trees are the principal host for the Soapberry Hairstreak. Prickly-ash is the only native host in this area for the Giant Swallowtail. Juniper is used by Juniper Hairstreaks.

A few butterflies are not as fussy and may use a variety of plants of several families. Hence, one may find Tiger Swallowtail larvae on ash, elm, cottonwood, or willow (among others). The Red-spotted Purple is almost as non-discriminating, using oak, willow, elm, and others. Similarly, the Giant Leopard Moth (our woolly-bear as caterpillar) and the Io Moth, whose caterpillars can cause a painful swelling on human flesh, may be found on many trees and shrubs.

Unlike other members of the order, such as bag-worms and tent-caterpillars, these butterflies and moths are not dangerous to the tree nor do they make unsightly messes in them. Most feed on the underside of the leaves, chomping away at the edges. Some are high in the tops of the trees. Many feed only at night.

- Joann Karges

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Next Meeting:

Thursday, September 7 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
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<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if this is a	___ Student	\$15
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 Georgetown, TX 78627

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