



# THE TEXAS SAGE

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Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter

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## President's Corner ...

### North Central NPSOT February Meeting

On this evening, we had the privilege of learning about the Cross Timbers from Dr. Richard Francaviglia. A truly charming gentleman who right away offered to help with the meeting facilities setup and then proceeded to fascinate us with the history of the Cross Timbers region. We learned that Dr. Francaviglia has been intrigued by the Cross Timbers area for more than thirty years. As a young boy he gazed out of the car windows at the gnarled trees traveling westward on a family trip. In early 1830's, Washington Irving described the Cross Timbers as "forests of cast iron" which were harsh and even stole pieces of his clothing leaving them to hang like flags from the tree branches. The area is vast and spans across portions of the three states of Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Dr. Francaviglia emphasized while the Cross Timbers does not compose a single forest but is rather a mosaic of post oak and blackjack oak forests interspersed with prairies and crossed with rivers. An area diverse in rainfall, temperatures and history, we learned about the true ecological significance.

Following the speaker, the business meeting centered on a discussion about state versus local membership. As a local chapter of the Texas Native Plant Society, membership status applies only to the state organization. Many of us, including myself have considered the local newsletter donation as local membership in the North Central Chapter. To my surprise I learned that according to state charter, membership is limited to the state and while we have an affiliation with the local chapter there are no local dues per se. Each local chapter is encouraged to solicit local funding by sales of advertisements

or donations to defray local meeting and newsletter costs. One of the goals this year is to obtain local advertising to cover publication costs and to raise enough money at each meeting raffle to cover the costs of the room rental.

Gailon Hardin was the proud winner of the Possum Haw tree while Dr. Francaviglia was fortunate in having a winning raffle ticket and won a lovely garden book. A third gift of a candy dish was won by another lucky attendee. Remember that when you win, you should bring or send another raffle item to feed the kitty. It is a lot of fun and brings out our natural competitive instincts.

A rare opportunity was offered to the membership to join with the Dallas chapter to co-host a June meeting featuring the author, Jill Noakes. Her new book, Challenges of a Native Plant Nursery, will appeal to the weekend gardener and professional as well. We will be arranging car-pools to Dallas which will leave from the Botanical Gardens.

As a reminder, there are numerous gardens that we support through volunteer maintenance efforts. If you are a new member or find yourself with time on your hands, it is an excellent way to learn or teach about native plants. Some gardens have escapees that need a good home. Check the calendar and join others interested in native plants.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting.

Sincerely,

Helena van Heiningen

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## **Benny Simpson's "Texas Native Trees" CD-ROM** **Just Released!**

Benny Simpson's "Texas Native Trees" web site is now available on CD-ROM at a discount price of \$10.00 for NPSOT members. Go to the Texas Native Trees website at <http://dallas.tamu.edu/native/index.html> to preview what is contained on the CD.

Your contribution is important! The sale of the "Texas Native Trees" CD will contribute to fund raising for the second phase of this educational web site project.

It's a great gift! Give the CD to your local libraries and schools.

Make check payable to "Texas A&M" and mail to the following address:

Texas A&M Research and Extension Center, Wayne A. Mackay, Ph.D., Associate Professor Horticulture, 17360 Coit Road, Dallas, TX 75252-6502

Again, each CD is \$10.00. Add \$3.00 shipping and handling for the first CD and \$2.00 for each additional CD. Please include the number of CD's you have ordered in the memo area of your check.

*Donations for the web site project will be accepted from individuals or NPSOT chapters. Make donation checks payable to Texas A&M and mail to Dana Tucker, NPSOT Coordinator, P.O. Box 891, Georgetown, TX 78627.*

### **Demo Garden News**

#### Granbury Road Sub-Courthouse

There will be a work day on Saturday, March 3, from 8 AM to noon. Bring clippers and join the Granbury Road Sub-Courthouse Raiders!!!

Contact Helena van Heiningen 817.244.5338 for additional information.

#### Hulen Library

Environmental Project: Native Plant Garden

This project is designed to educate the public in the use of native plants in the home landscape. In accomplishing this, we master gardeners are learning as well.

We will learn which native plants are suited to our situation and their seasonal maintenance requirements. We are in the process of learning details of the specific plants in the garden by making reports which will ultimately be used as handouts to the public. In giving

these reports we are learning the Latin names and how to pronounce them.

We are working with the library staff in promoting native plants by scheduling slide shows and bulletin board displays and are looking forward to other projects as we go along. See you at the September Project Fair!

We will meet at the garden for grooming and maintenance work on the last Thursday of the month at 10:30 AM through April. Summer dates are the last Wednesday at 8:30 a.m., other days as needed. Contact Ev Woodrey at 817.295.4683 for additional information.

#### Veterans Park Wildscape

There will be two work days this month. One on Saturday, March 3 and one on Saturday the 17th, both from 9:00-NOON. If you would like more information, contact Molly Hollar at 817.860.5580.

### **Treasurer's Report**

by Alan Klein

Balance	\$524.89
Receipts	\$575.00
Disbursements	(\$215.00)
Balance (02/15/01)	<u>\$884.89</u>

### **Congratulations, Gailon!**

The Tarrant County Master Gardener Association held its annual appreciation banquet December 7, 2000 to honor its volunteers. Among the winners was Gailon Hardin, who was named Intern of the Year. During the year, Gailon volunteered for the Wildscape at Veterans Park, Tarrant County Extension Office, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Howard Garrett's 'The Natural Way' WBAP weekend radio program, the Hulen Library native plant demonstration garden, the Natural Urban Living Garden Show, the Tarrant County Landscape Design school, as well as other programs. Gailon is also a Master Composter and Master Naturalist.

# What's Happening . . .

**Thursday, March 1**

**7:00 PM**

**Fort Worth Botanic Gardens**

**NPSOT North Central Chapter Meeting.** This month's program will be a slide show and talk by Joe Liggio, author and photographer of Wild Orchids of Texas. Contact Helena van Heiningen, President, at 817.244.5338 for further information.

**Saturday, March 3**

**8:00 AM - NOON**

**Granbury Road Demonstration Garden**

Workday at the Granbury Road Sub-Courthouse demonstration garden. Bring clippers and tools to weed and trim. Contact Helena van Heiningen at 817.244.5338 for further information.

**Saturdays, March 3 and 17**

**9:00 AM - NOON**

**Veterans Park Wildscape, Arlington**

Volunteer Workday at the Veterans Park Wildscape. If you would like more information, contact Molly Hollar at 817.860.5580. The Wildscape is located at the intersection of Arkansas Lane and Spanish Trail. Meet in the Southeast corner of the park.

**Thursday, March 15**

**Meeting - 7:00 PM, Program - 8:00 PM**

**Walnut Hill Recreation Center**

NPSOT Dallas Chapter Meeting. Jeff Quayle will be speaking on Rare and Unusual/Uncommon Wildflowers of North Central Texas. Jeff will also discuss how he discovered *Senecio quaylei*. Illustrations of *Senecio quaylei*, drawn by Linny Heagy from BRIT, will be for sale at a cost of \$10.00 each. The Recreation Center is at the intersection of Walnut Hill Lane and Midway Road.

**Friday-Sunday, March 16-18**

**Deep East Texas**

**Sorry!** The NPSOT's 2001 Spring Field Trip scheduled for this date has been filled. However, an additional trip has been planned for April 27-29. See below for more details!

**Saturday, March 31**

**7:30 AM (9:00 AM)**

**Fossil Hill**

This a great opportunity to visit Fossil Hill (SW Montague Co on Lake Amon Carter), the weekend getaway place owned by Jeanne Erickson and her husband, Wayne. Located in the Western Cross Timbers, this 68 acre tract is home to several rare and unusual plants, and various birds and mammals. Carpooling is encouraged, due to limited parking and to discourage compaction. What to bring? Snacks or a lunch, water (drinks provided), folding chairs, sunscreen, appropriate clothing (long pants for exploration), flashlights (for looking in the hiding places in the rocks), binoculars, and cameras. You get the idea! Toilet facilities will be available. Canoeing is an option in the afternoon if the wind cooperates. Please RSVP to Jeff Quayle at [prairie lover@bigfoot.com](mailto:prairie lover@bigfoot.com), 817.738.1322 by March 28th. We will leave at 7:30 am from the Cracker Barrel at I-35 @ Meacham Blvd to carpool. To get Fossil Hill: Go north on I-35W, then Hwy 287 north about 22 miles to Decatur and another 28 miles to FM 1125 near Bowie. Take exit for Amon Carter Lake/FM 1125. Go south on FM 1125 and go 5.6 miles to Turkey Creek Road on the left (a gravel road). Go 0.75 miles to Laird Road and turn right. Go 1.8 miles to the triple fork in the road. Take the middle fork for 0.5 miles to gate. They'll meet us at the gate around 9:00 am. Jeff's mobile number is 817.729-0283 in case you get lost.

**Saturday, April 7**

**10:00 AM - NOON**

**The Old Bedford School**

If you miss him March 1 at the NPSOT North Central Chapter meeting, you can hear Joe Liggio of Houston, author of Wild Orchids of Texas, at a program sponsored by the Cross Timbers Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. This program will also include a book signing, with books available at \$29.95 plus tax. The program will be at the Old Bedford School in Bedford. The school is in the vicinity of the Northeast Mall, in northeast Tarrant County. To reach the school from the interchange of NE Loop 820 and 121/183, go east on 121/183 to the Forest Ridge Drive exit. Go north on Forest Ridge Drive to Bedford Road. Turn right on Bedford Road. The school is about 2 blocks on the left, next to Bedford Glass and Mirror. The physical address is 2400 School Lane, in the 1800 block of Bedford Road. The phone number is (817) 952-2290.

**April 7 - 22**

**Wildseed Farms Market Center**

The annual Wildseed Farms Wildflower Celebration will be held in Fredericksburg from April 7 - 22. Acres of Texas bluebonnets and other wildflower fields will be on display. Wine tastings from Hill Country wineries and toe-tapping Texas music will be performed on the weekends. The walking trail will be open everyday for visitors to view and cut their own wildflower bouquet. Wildseed Farms is located seven miles east of Fredericksburg on US 290. Call 830.990.1393 for additional information or visit <http://www.wildseedfarms.com>.

**Saturday - Sunday, April 21 - 22**

**The Heard Museum**

The Heard Natural Science Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary in McKinney will hold it's Twelfth Annual Native Plant Sale from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM on Saturday and from NOON - 4:00 PM on Sunday. For more information, either call the Museum at 972.562.5566 or visit their website at <http://www.heardmuseum.org/plantsale99/plantsaleindex.html>.

**Saturday - Sunday, April 27 - 29**

**Newton County**

In response to the many NPSOT members who were not able to attend the field trip on March 16-18, another trip has been organized. Visit the "Monthly Park Events" link at <http://www.whisperingcreekrvpark.com> for additional information on this "Native Plant and Nature Tour" program. Or call 409.379.8400 for information/reservations.

## Plant of the Month Mexican Plum

**Latin Name:** *Prunus mexicana*

**Landscape Zone:** 6-8

**Size:** 15 - 25 feet

**Leaves:** Deciduous

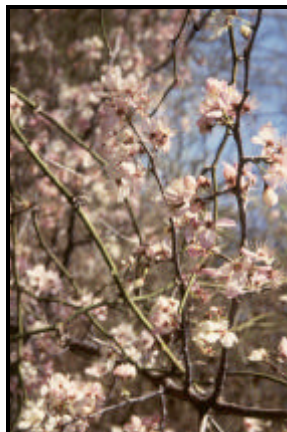
**Flowers:** Early Spring (late February - March), 1 inch white flowers

**Fruit:** Late Summer, small purple plums

**Soil:** Adaptable, well drained

**Exposure:** Full sun to part shade

**Water:** Moderately drought tolerant



I have Mexican Plum growing as an under story tree in a Red Oak woodland and as a freestanding specimen in full sun. For me, this tree is a true harbinger of spring here in North Texas. It often flowers as early as late February and is the first thing to bloom in my garden. The tiny white fragrant flowers appear before the leaves, smothering the crowns of the Mexican Plum creating an illusion of fluffy white clouds suspended amongst the canopy of the taller woodland trees.

This tree is well behaved and well adapted to urban life. It generally develops a single trunk and doesn't produce suckers like some other native species of *Prunus*. Its small stature lends itself to planting in confined suburban landscapes. It also has several seasons of interest which makes it a good garden worthy plant. Flowers in the spring, small purple plums in late summer and yellow fall color. The plums make good forage for wildlife and can also be used for jams and jellies.

Stephen P. Haydon

Don't forget, we hope to have the "plant of the month" as one of the raffle prizes at each month's meeting.

### Come and get it . . .

Our first entry in this column! Debbie York is looking for a home for an accomplished manure producing rabbit named Buck. If you are an industrious gardener, who can provide a good home for a rabbit, call Debbie York at 817.427.6651 (work) or 817.581.2802 (home). No doubt, Buck will reward your generosity!

### Looking for . . .

This is our companion to the section above. Having trouble locating that Flame sumac? Want to know where to get the best bulk prices for compost? Let us know what you're looking for and we'll post it here.

For example, we are in need of the following replacement plants for the Granbury Sub-Courthouse demo garden. Contact Helena van Heiningen at 817.244.5338 if you'd like to contribute.

- 10 #1 *Salvia greggii* - Red
- 7 #1 *Wedelia hispida* Zexmenia
- 6 #1 *Eupatorium greggii* Blue Mistflower
- 35 #1 *Aster oblongifolia* Fall Aster
- 10 4" Flats (18) *Melampodium leucanthum* Blackfoot daisy

## Texas SmartScape CD to Encourage Native Landscaping

A team of local professionals is currently hard at work on an interactive CD that encourages landscaping with beautiful north central Texas native and adapted plants. Native and adapted plants (not your typical xeriscaping types) require less pesticide, fertilizer, and water to thrive in our north Texas area. The Texas SmartScape CD will highlight the benefits of native and adapted plants to urban storm water quality and drinking water conservation.

In the first week of March, all cities, counties, and agencies participating in the regional storm water program will receive a Texas SmartScape CD to use as a public information tool in both storm water and water conservation programs. Each city, county, or agency will be able to duplicate and distribute the CD on a free, or duplication cost only, basis. A small city within limited growth might

choose to duplicate a small number of Texas SmartScape CDs on an in-house or personal computer. Other entities could act independently or cooperatively to duplicate large numbers of CDs and add professional labels at reasonable costs. Many business in Texas and this area would gladly take an order.

For additional information, please contact Leslie Calderon, NCTCOG, at 817-608-2341 or the project manager, Gene Rattan, Tarrant County Environmental Health Division at 817-871-7511.

(Taken from the *Post Oak*, a publication of Arlington Conservation Council, January 2001, John Darling, editor.)

### In Memoriam

#### **Arnold Davis**

Arnold Davis who was a true friend of the prairies passed away recently. He worked closely with Dr. Geoffrey Stanford, the founder of the Native Prairies Association of Texas, and was a founding member, and one of the four signers of our state charter.

Arnold was largely responsible for the Proceedings of the Tenth North American Prairie Conference held here in Texas. He was our President, as well as serving on the board for a number of years. He was the person who recruited me into the board. Arnold was a passionate and sweet man, and my prairie mentor.

Some of you will remember Arnold's thoughtful and helpful e-mails to the NPSOT-NPAT list serve. He was an experienced native grasses/wildflowers person with much experience in restoration. Arnold was the first manager of the first Plant Materials Center in Texas. The Plant Materials Centers are under the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) and have been responsible for providing for commercial production many of the native plants used in restorations today, including side-oats grama, Indian grass, switch grass, partridge pea, purple and white prairie clover, and many others.

(Obtained from the Trinity Forks Chapter Native Plant Society of Texas newsletter, written by Lee Stone)

#### **Dr. Geoffrey Stanford**

Geoff was the Founding Director of the Dallas Nature Center, founder of the Native Prairies Association of Texas, winner of NPAT's 2000 Nancy Benedict Memorial Award, a surgeon, an inventor, and one of the most eminent proponents of natural ecosystems that this state had. And now he's gone. He will be sorely missed.

Many of you probably read the article by Diana Griffith in *The Dallas Morning News* on December 18, 2000. For those of you who did not, here are some of the highlights:

- Geoff was born on March 29, 1916, became one of England's youngest medical students, then went off to the second World War to hone his skills. Somehow he made time to grow rare orchids during his off hours.
- In 1965 Geoff was off to a position at Notre Dame University joining his friend and colleague, Mr. Horsbrugh. Later, Mr. Horsbrugh moved to Texas and, once again, Geoff followed, taking a position at Rice University. Soon after, Dave Fox of Fox & Jacobs Development Company was able to lure him to Dallas with the promise of 633 acres of wilderness that was to become the Dallas Nature Center.
- In 1984 Geoff decided the Texas needed an organization to specifically represent its prairies—hence the Native Prairies Association of Texas.

(Obtained from the *Native Plant Society of Texas News*)

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 North Central Chapter  
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### Next Meeting

Thursday, March 1 at  
 7PM at the Fort Worth  
 Botanic Gardens

### 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  
 Check here if this is a membership renewal  \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$15  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sr. Citizen \$15

To receive a one-year subscription to the North Central Chapter newsletter, *The Texas Sage*, please enclose an additional \$15. Send your check, payable to NPSOT, and updated contact information to:

Alan Klein  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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City, State Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Texas Sage

is a monthly publication of the North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas.

For changes of address or information about contributing to the newsletter, please contact either of the newsletter editors.

The deadline for submitting articles for inclusion in next month's newsletter is the 10th of every month.

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