



# THE TEXAS SAGE

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Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter

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July 2001

## President's Corner . . .

Dear Members:

We are winding up summer temperatures (that's wishful thinking!) and looking forward to Fall. Fall means we are quickly approaching the Fall NPSOT Garden Tour. The tour is going to be a "don't miss event". Many volunteers will be needed to help at each garden. Please volunteer and recruit your best friends. You will have a wonderful time sharing information with the public who is otherwise unaware of native plants as an option. This is a "golden opportunity" to show the community what lovely gardens can be achieved with natives. Support the efforts of our chapter by volunteering and selling tickets.

I want to encourage each and every one of you to attend the state meeting in Aus-

tin this October. It promises to be a one of a kind event with experts from each region.

In addition, each year the state conference sponsors a scholarship Silent Auction. Please donate any and all items to me, and I will make sure they are transported and offered from the North Central Chapter. These do not have to be expensive items or items related to native plants. Everything from rocking chairs to note cards and jellies are welcomed. Local interest items are especially appreciated.

Hope you are having a "cool" summer and look forward to seeing you at the August meeting.

Helena

## August Meeting

Join us August 2nd as Lynda Strain, owner of LKS Garden Designs in Plano, will give us a hands-on group involvement talk on "Landscape Problem Solving with Native Plants." Lynda presented this workshop at the NPSOT State Symposium in Denton last Fall. Don't miss this opportunity.

Lynda teaches continuing education at Collin County Community College (CCCC) and has been a gardener for years. Her parents were gardeners. Her grand parents were gardeners. Her great grandfather was the head gardener for the old Santa Barbara Hotel in California.

Come hear and learn!

## Joint Meeting Report

There's nothing finer than a couple inches of rain on the last day of June, unless it's sharing that rain with friends in a native demonstration garden. Our joint meeting with the Dallas chapter at the Texas Discovery Gardens found us sharing umbrellas, buying great butterfly T-shirts and native plant books; and of course, eating. There was enough food for an army. Thanks to all who brought the wonderful spread. Jill Nokes was the key note speaker and sold and autographed her latest book How to Grow Native Plants. Field trips included the butterfly garden and a plant collection of Benny Simpson's. Since the field trips were hampered a bit by the downpour, we are checking into a repeat performance of TDG in the September time frame. Watch the newsletter for the date and hope for no rain.

## A Clean Edge, Indeed!

(Our President was recently featured in the "Show Us Your Garden" section of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. Unbeknownst to her, we are including the text here for those of you who didn't get to see the article.)

### **Show Us Your Garden**

**Gardeners:** Helena van Heiningen and Nord Petersen

**Garden:** 8020 Llano Ave., Benbrook

**Their gardening philosophy:** Six years ago, van Heiningen and her daughter, Vickie, were at the Fort Worth Home and Garden Show when they discovered native Texas gardening. Now, their front yard and huge back yard are landscaped with tough Texas plants, and van Heiningen has become the president of the North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas. "We moved here from Florida, so this is all totally new to us," van Heiningen says. "The local chapter had a booth, so I bought a plant and it grew," she says. "It's common sense to use plants that have adapted to this area. A lot of times, people think natives are cactus and rocks. They're not."

**Favorite plants:** *Salvia greggii*, desert willow, yuccas, artemesia, coreopsis and guara.

**Her secret for soil preparation:** The yard she got with the house was full of Johnson grass, which she made into flower beds by using lasagna gardening. "We took thick pieces of wet newspapers and overlapped them on the ground, put a little cow manure and 18 inches of organic matter [grass clippings and leaves] on top," van Heiningen says. That killed the weeds and gave her a thick, rich soil for planting.

**Her secret for garden beauty:** Van Heiningen knows that she faces some prejudices against native plants. "People think they're weeds," she says, looking over her back yard. "If I had this in the front yard, I wouldn't be allowed to keep it."

To make people more aware, she helped plant a native Texas demonstration garden at the sub courthouse on Granbury Road.

"The secret is a clean edge," she confides.

For more information about the North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas, check out [www.txnativeplants.org](http://www.txnativeplants.org). Amanda Rogers

## Demo Garden News

### Granbury Road Sub-Courthouse

Our monthly work day will be Saturday, August 11 from 8 am to noon. Come one, come all and help keep the garden free of weeds and help make it ready for the Fall Garden Tour. For new members you can learn how to maintain and grow native plants and there are always escapees for the taking that need good homes. Join the Granbury Road Raiders and get involved. Contact Helena van Heiningen 817.244.5338 for additional information.

### Hulen Library

We will meet at the garden for grooming and maintenance work on the last Wednesday of the month 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 a workday on Saturday, August 4 from 9:00-NOON. If you would like more information, contact Molly Hollar at 817.860.5580.

## What's Happening . . .

**Saturday, August 4**

**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.

**Saturday, August 11**

**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.

**Thursday, September 6**

**7:00 PM**

**Fort Worth Botanic Gardens**

**NPSOT North Central Chapter Meeting.** This month, come hear Stephen Chamblee of the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens speaking on "Natives in the Fort Worth Botanic Gardens". Contact Helena van Heiningen, President, at 817.244.5338 for further information.

**September 28 - October 21**

**Texas Discovery Gardens, Fair Park**

7th Annual "Butterflies in the Blachly" live butterfly exhibit. Volunteers share the beauty and wonder of insects and plants with visitors. We ask you to attend training, and commit to a minimum of three, four-hour shifts. Volunteers receive free parking and admission to the State Fair of Texas, and their immediate family is invited to attend the members' preview of the butterfly exhibit. Call 214-428-7476 x25 with questions.

**October 4 - 7**

**Austin, TX**

NPSOT/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center 2001 Joint Symposium and NPSOT Annual Meeting. This meeting/symposium will concentrate on every region of Texas and is a "don't miss" opportunity. Flyers and additional information will be available at the August meeting and in future newsletters.

But, just to give you an idea of what to expect, here are some tidbits. Workshops will include such topics as: "Forum on Propagation Techniques for Native Plants", "Basics of Plant Rescue" and "Gardening with Deer - It's a Growing Problem!" And, you can participate in fields trips to such places as: Indiangrass Wildlife Sanctuary, Bamberger Selah Ranch and Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. This is only a *sample* of the learning opportunities available!

**March 2002**

**Fort Worth Botanic Gardens**

A consortium comprised of BRIT, the Botanic Gardens and the FW Botanical Society, is planning an exciting event at the Botanic Gardens next spring. They will be hosting a butterfly display at the Garden during the month of March, 2002, which most likely will attract an even greater crowd than the one held in 2000. These organizations want to take the opportunity to educate this large audience on the importance of native plants and the critical role of pollinators through an exhibit and educational outreach program for schools. They would like to include the Native Plant Society as one of their partners in this effort.

Although the next planning meeting July 30, 1:30 pm at the Botanic Gardens may have taken place before this newsletter arrives, the North Central Chapter would like a volunteer to represent us at this meeting (if not too late) and at future meetings.

Please contact Helena at 817.244.5338 if interested. BRIT's contact person for this event is Pat Harrison, Head of Education, (817) 332-4441.

## Plant of the Month Red Yucca

**Latin Name:** Hesperaloe parviflora

**Landscape Zone:** 7 - 8

**Size:** 2 – 4 feet across

**Leaves:** Sword like and evergreen

**Flowers:** One inch pink to red flowers on four to eight foot arching stalks from March to September

**Soil:** Adaptable, well drained

**Exposure:** Full sun to partial shade

**Water:** Drought tolerant

The Red Yucca is a true Texas native; however, it is rarely found in the wild. On the other hand it is one of the most commonly used landscape plants in our area and with good reason. I find it to be a valuable garden plant offering dramatic spiky foliage for a change of texture amongst softer plants. I prefer to use it in bold drifts although its sword like foliage can make a statement as a single plant. Its tall arching flower spikes reminiscent of fishing rods offer a splash of color from March to September. I have it planted extensively in conjunction with Malvaviscus and the two plants in combination offer a veritable haven for hummingbirds. The Red Yucca is drought tolerant once established and does best in full sun although it will tolerate light shade. Have fun with the bold lines of this dramatic and versatile plant.

Stephen P. Haydon

## NPSOT Garden Tour Update

Don't despair; the cooler days of fall are soon coming along with more comfortable gardening weather as well as our **first public garden tour – October 13 & 14.**

Eight gardens have been selected and Andy Wasowski has been secured as our keynote speaker. Letters have been dispatched to our favorite vendors that support our gardening habit and the sponsorship and donations are now coming in. The tour guidebook is currently being developed. As well as a guidebook, it is our hope that we will end up with a reference guide that will help foster enthusiasm and knowledge for gardening with native plants in North Texas.

We have a great core of dedicated individuals that are keeping this project going forward but there is opportunity for every member to help out. Mark your calendars now for October 13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. We will need everyone's help during the tour! Recruit friends and relatives - gardening expertise is not necessary for many of the jobs like collecting and selling tickets and directing foot traffic in the gardens. All volunteers will be invited to a special pre-tour Tour so no one will miss seeing the great gardens. Please call Janan Rabiah, Garden Tour Chairperson, at (817) 924-3378 or email [jrabiah@ix.netcom.com](mailto:jrabiah@ix.netcom.com) if you and your friends can help.

## 7th Annual Butterflies in the Blachly Exhibit

Join us for the 7th Butterflies in the Blachly live butterfly exhibit September 28 - October 21! Volunteers share the beauty and wonder of insects and plants with visitors. We ask you to attend training, and commit to a minimum of three, four-hour shifts. Volunteers receive free parking and admission to the State Fair, and their immediate family is invited to attend the members' preview of the butterfly exhibit.

Training will be on three days: Sat. August 25th, 9am to 1pm; Wed. September 12th, 10am to 12:30 and Thurs. September 13th, 5:30 to 8pm. Each training session will be held at the Texas Discovery Gardens. Saturday is mandatory training for all volunteers, new and returning. There are new experiences in 2001! Bring your personal calendar to sign up for your shifts. September 12th and 13th will be the same, hands-on class. It's in the conservatory with the butterflies and plants! Choose Wednesday morning OR Thursday evening.

Shifts are four hours (10:00am - 2:00pm, or 2:00pm - 6:00pm), available every day. Choose: **Conservatory Guide**—Work with the butterflies! Monitor the plants, answer questions and prevent butterfly escape. **Host/Hostess** Greet visitors, assist in family craft activities, lead garden tours or monarch tagging walks.

Call TDG at 214-428-7476 x25 with questions or send an email to [edu@texasdiscoverygardens.org](mailto:edu@texasdiscoverygardens.org) with "BinB volunteer" in your subject line.

## Volunteer Needed

Our chapter needs a volunteer to head up the Nominating Committee responsible for selecting officers for next year. Please contact any current officers (named on page one of this newsletter) to offer your services. And thanks in advance!

## Conservation License Plates

The new conservation license plate featuring bluebonnet artwork began rolling off the production line at Wynne State Prison in Huntsville this summer. TPW Communications shot video of plate production and fed it by satellite to Texas TV stations. TV news operations in Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, Houston and San Antonio picked up the feed, which was also picked up by the NBC television network and fed back to its local affiliates in Texas. Revenue from this second conservation plate from TPW will help operate state parks. TPW's first conservation plate, featuring the Texas horned lizard has become the 3rd most popular specialty plate in Texas and raised more than \$300,000 to support wildlife diversity programs since it was launched last year. For information on how to obtain either conservation license plate go to <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/plate/index.htm>.

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### Next Meeting

Thursday, August 2 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  \_\_\_\_\_ Student \$15  
membership renewal \_\_\_\_\_ 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:

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### 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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