



THE TEXAS SAGE

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter
Volume 15, Number 2
March 2003

Year 2003 Officers and Committee Chairs

President

Gailon Hardin
817-457-4703
ghardin@flash.net

Vice President & Program Chair

Dagmar Higgins
817-496-0543
d3kh@earthlink.net

Treasurer

Alan Klein
817-784-8928
alanwk1@attbi.com

Secretary

Pat Lovejoy
817-447-7924
patlovejoy@att.net

Historian

Evaline Woodrey
817-295-4683
ewoodrey@prodigy.net

Hospitality Chair

Nelda Forston
817-498-5808
nforston@aol.com

Membership Chair

Helena vanHeiningen
817-244-5338
hvanhein@aol.com

Webmaster

Michelle May
817-924-0156
jnmmy@charter.net

Field Reporter

Jeff Quayle
817-738-1322
prairielover@ev1.net



Contents

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| The President's Corner | 1 |
| Bees | 2 |
| Demo Gardens | 2 |
| Garden Cuttings | 2 |
| Plant of the Month | 3 |

The President's Corner

As I read the "Garden Cuttings" article in our February issue, I wondered what Jim Leavy was talking about when he said that winter is a time "some gardeners spend indoors being inspired by a good horticultural book, magazine, or catalog." Not true for me: during the month of February, I trimmed my native perennials and mulched my front yard. That's 5,000 square feet of rockrose, horseherb, purple coneflower, datura, turks cap, beautyberry, and many more. Now, to be a true NPSOT member I should use the Latin names. Let's see: *Pavonia lasiopetala*, *Calyptocarpis vialis*, *Echinacea purpurea*, *Datura wrightii*, *Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii*, and *Callicarpa americana*. Seven pickup loads of mulch covered less than half of the area.

With any luck I will finish mulching in March. Furthermore, I hired a local arborist to cut down 20 redbud photinias and replaced them with native yaupons (*Ilex vomitoria*). The photinias were over 20 years old and dead or dying. Yes, they

provided wanted privacy and were a lovely red in the spring—when they were alive. The yaupons will provide the same privacy plus food and cover for the birds, and they will probably live forever.

As I listened to Bill Richerson at our February meeting, he caught my attention when he said the Fort Worth Nature Center is a place to teach children about nature. A lot of people do not have a backyard habitat outside their front door and that's why the FWNC is so valuable. Its 3600 acres, 20 minutes from downtown Fort Worth, can enhance their lives by introducing them to unique plants, animals, birds, butterflies, and even alligators for the adventurous. The events at the Nature Center are abundant: bird counts, summer camps, 25 miles of hiking trails, tree and wildflower identification, canoe training and tours. And a snake weekend? I'm busy then.

Gailon

Our March speaker will be Dottie Woodson of the Texas Extension Service. She will discuss the innovative Smartscape CD. Dottie will also bring handouts and talk about plants for boggy and wet areas. And there will be an extensive list of plants of the Fort Worth Nature Center just in time for spring trips there.

The Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park

After weeks of paperwork, it's now official: The Arlington City Council has voted unanimously to name the Wildscape at Veterans Park in honor of its most dedicated proponent. Molly was informed at her surprise birthday party but took it much too calmly because she was sure it was a joke. Maybe she'll believe it when she reads this. At last Arlington's biggest and best Wildscape has a proper name.



Bees—Friends, not Foes

Of the 4500 to 5000 species of bees in the United States, most of us know only two of them well: the bumblebee and the honey bee. They may be social or solitary, but all have one thing in common: they provide pollen, or a mixture of pollen and nectar, for their larvae, and therefore are equipped to transport pollen on their feet in special pollen sacs or in their mouths.

Since its importation from the Old World about 1683, the honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) has become the most consistent pollinator of North American crops, many of which are also alien species. It is estimated that 80% of our crops are pollinated by these bees, until recently when the species declined dramatically because of mites and diseases. Native bees may eventually succeed in filling the gap as pollinators; more certain are the consequences in commercial honey production.

Other bees we may see frequently in our gardens are the large, robust carpenter bee and the small, shiny green halictid or sweat bee.

The size of a bumblebee, the all-black carpenter bee seems clumsy as it lands on small flowers. Although this bee makes excavations up to 12" long in tree stumps and in buildings, its damage is minimal. In its hole the bee provides individual cells for its larvae, where they will develop and later hibernate.

The metallic-green halictid, or sweat bee (so called because it is believed to be attracted to human sweat) is about ½" long and is quite common in our area as it visits many different flowers, but seems to prefer composites. After it flies from a flower, we may watch it return time and time again to a certain area in the ground, bare soil or a crevice between rocks, where it has made a burrow. Here it will leave an egg and a pollen-nectar ball for the young larva, and then will seal off the hole with dirt.

It is possible that some of our Texas native plants are pollinated by only one species of wild bee, as has been discovered about certain plants in other areas of the United States. But certainly those of us who provide flowering plants are doing our share to protect these beneficial insects, and perhaps a plant species as well.

Joann Karges, adapted from a previous issue of The Texas Sage

Demo Garden Opportunities

Granbury Road Subcourthouse Meet at the Subcourthouse on second Saturdays and last Tuesdays for general maintenance. We begin at 9:00 am and work for 2 or 3 hours. The subcourthouse is 2 miles south of Loop 820 on Granbury Road. Contact Gailon Hardin, 817-457-4703, or ghardin@flash.net, for more information about the garden.

Hulen Library We meet at the garden for grooming and maintenance on the last Thursday of the month at 10:00 am through April, other days as needed. Contact Ev Woodrey at 817-295-4683 for additional information.

The Molly Hollar Wildscape Workdays are on the first Saturday of every month at Veterans Park, 9:00 am until noon. Activities include planting, gathering seed, weeding, pruning etc. For more information, contact Molly Hollar at 817-860-5580.



Garden Cuttings



Spring is around the corner; now if the corner would just stand still. Our Texas natives know what to do this time of year. However, our adaptive plants want to start growing during warm spells. If you read last month's tip, you might have put down a few inches of mulch that will insulate the ground and keep soil temperatures relatively cool, thus delaying the growth of some of our naive adaptives. If not, there still may be time. Again, most of our native plants do not need a helping hand, but late March is a good time to fertilize everything else. Organic is the way to go.

Now is the time to start selectively weeding before the annuals set seed and the perennials set long roots. Although this task may seem overwhelming (and it will be if you attempt to do it all at once), a little work over many sessions will eventually accomplish the end. Mulch applied at a depth of two to three inches can also be used to

smother annual weeds. If ingested daily, mulch can also cure the common cold, relieve minor aches and pains, and prevent memory loss (just kidding!).

Now is probably a good time to avoid pruning red oaks and live oaks. Wait until the sweltering heat of July or August in order to avoid oak wilt. The beetle that carries the oak wilt disease will be emerging now from its winter dormancy if it hasn't already done so. Fresh wounds on a tree allow easy access to the boring beetle and therefore to the potential disease. When hot weather arrives, the beetle's activity slows down to the point where it is safe to prune again. So if you must prune your red and live oaks, do so during the doldrums of summer and winter.

Once again, it's time to visit the garden, and if yours is like mine, something is already blooming.

Jim Leavy, adapted from The Texas Sage, April 1998

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Coral Honeysuckle



LATIN NAME: *Lonicera sempervirens* (luh-neh-SARE-ah sem-per-VYE-renz)
 RANGE: Eastern half of United States
 SIZE: High climbing (climbs by twining)
 LEAVES: Dark or olive green on top, lighter underneath
 FLOWERS: Red, 2-inch clusters
 SOIL: Clay, sand, loam & caliche; will tolerate poor drainage
 EXPOSURE: Full sun, part shade
 BLOOM PERIOD: Everblooming in mild weather
 WATER: Drought tolerant

This is a honeysuckle for all seasons and all reasons. It is nearly evergreen, blooms nearly year-round except in extreme weather, and has red berries in winter. It is very well behaved, unlike Japanese honeysuckle, and will fill a fence with beautiful blooms. It will cover the ground if given nothing to climb on and will grow in shade (but barely bloom). Give it plenty of time to establish.

I had a plant that I thought was not going to make it due to poor soil and lack of attention, but after 2 years or more it finally took off. Wasowski says its ideal situation is morning sun and afternoon shade. In full sun, shade its roots with other perennials or even rocks. Birds love it. Hummingbirds visit the trumpet-shaped blossoms and other birds eat the red berries. The genus *Lonicera* is named for Adam Lonitzer, a German naturalist and herbalist.

Evaline Woodrey (Illustration adapted from Nokes, J: Native Plants of Texas and the Southwest. Austin, Texas Monthly Press, 1986.)

New Web site provides photos and profiles of more than 600 imperiled native plants

The Center for Plant Conservation has launched a new Web site that provides comprehensive information about the country's native, imperiled plants. The plant profiles, available at centerforplantconservation.org, include photos of plants in the National Collection of Endangered Plants. Each profile contains a description, distribution, conservation status, and a complete bibliography.

The Center for Plant Conservation is dedicated solely to preventing the extinction of America's imperiled native flora. The Center is a network of more than 30 of America's leading botanical institutions. By conducting conservation programs in horticulture, research, awareness, and information exchange, the Center's network is striving to save America's rarest plants from being lost forever. For more information about the Center, please visit the Web site at centerforplantconservation.org

Newsletter Sponsors

The following businesses support our monthly newsletter. Please support them.

Green Mama's Organic Garden Market
 5324 Davis Blvd
 North Richland Hills, TX 76180
 817-514-7336
www.greenmamas.com

Rabbit Hill Farm
Natural fertilizers and soil amendments
 288 SW CR 0020
 Corsicana, TX 75110
 903-872-4289
www.aogc.org/pages/rhf/

Blooming Colors Nursery
 and Landscaping
 2221 Ira E Woods Ave
 Grapevine, TX 76051
 817-416-6669
www.bloomingcolorsnursery.com

Redenta's Garden
 5111 W Arkansas Ln
 Arlington, TX 76016
 817-451-2149
www.redentas.com

Native American Seed
 P.O. Box 185
 127 N 16th St
 Junction, TX 76849
 800-728-4043
www.seedsource.com

Shades of Green
Native and well-adapted plants and organic supplies
 8801 Coit Rd
 Frisco, TX 75035
 972-335-9095
sogreen@mindspring.com

Mike's Garden Center
 5703 Crowley Rd
 Fort Worth, TX 76134
 817-293-8736

North Central Chapter
 Native Plant Society of Texas
 Chapter President
 2311 Perkins Rd
 Arlington, TX 76016

Next Meeting

Join us Thursday, March 6,
 at 7:00 pm at the Fort Worth
 Botanic Gardens for
The SmartScape CD
 presented by
Dottie Woodson

Visit us on the Web at
www.txnativeplants.org

Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

We invite you to participate as a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas. Membership is open to any individual, family, or organization. Membership is renewable annually and extends for a year from the date we receive your original payment.

If you wish to join, please indicate your category of membership, then clip and mail this application along with the appropriate remittance to:

Native Plant Society of Texas
 P.O. Box 891, Georgetown, TX 78627
 512-868-8799 or 512-931-1166

- | | | | |
|---|------|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student | \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Group | \$35 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen | \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor | \$1000 |

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

County: _____

Phone: _____

Chapter Affiliation: North Central Chapter _____

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 the newsletter editor.

The deadline for submitting articles for inclusion in next month's newsletter is the 15th of every month.

John Darling, Editor
The Texas Sage
 1316 S. Pecan St.
 Arlington, TX 76010
 817-274-1077
1darling@airmail.net

The Texas Sage is printed on recycled paper.