



THE TEXAS SAGE

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 1

February 2005

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The President's Corner

Members and Friends:

First my thanks to:

- Gailon Hardin for being our President for the past 2 years;
- Helena vanHeiningen for being our Membership chair for the past 2 years;
- Anne Alderfer for all her hard work on the Home and Garden Shows;
- Hester Schwarzer for being our Secretary;
- Devanie Fergus, our Treasurer who worked so hard on our financial matters;
- Webmaster Michelle May, who resurrected our website;
- Historian Evaline Woodrey;
- Sandy Balch for preparing our activities calendar;
- Taylor Stephens-Parker for our education projects
- Joyce Miller who provided us with delicious refreshments;
- John Darling for all his hard work on our wonderful newsletter;
- And Finally to YOU, who attend our meetings and help with our demo gardens.



Now to a NEW YEAR! My thanks in advance to Anne Alderfer, Devanie Fergus, Gailon Hardin, Helena van Heiningen, Sandy Balch, Hester Schwarzer, Evaline Woodrey, Donna Morris, Taylor Stephens-Parker, John Darling, and Vickie Neal, for agreeing to serve on the Board this year.

Most of you know the Board decided to change our meeting night to the second Thursday of each month in order to allow more of us to attend the BRIT lectures and other events that are often scheduled the first week of the month. We hope this will work for all of you.

I'm very excited about the wonderful programs Anne Alderfer has planned for us and the three-part workshop with Rosa Finsley that Taylor Stephens-Parker has prepared for us. The workshop will be FREE to members and will cost guests \$45. Bring your friends and neighbors; it's going to be a great workshop!

For those of you who missed our December meeting, Tarrant County Master Gardener Eleanor Tuck gave us a great program on bugs and tested our knowledge of them. Did you know we have over 1000 kinds of bugs in our back yards?

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February meeting: Thursday, February 10, 7:00 pm, Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Orchid Room

The Texas Tree Trails organization: Finding, Cataloguing, and Saving Area Historic Trees.

See a virtual tour of known area historic trees including those at our Botanic Garden meeting grounds. This organization has it all: grassroots activism, scientific experts and the backing of Texas Forest Service and the Trinity Blacklands Urban Forest Commission.

Sarah Bjornson, certified arborist with Arborological Service and Courtney Blevins, arborist with Texas Forest Service, explain the program and show the record tree specimens.

Check out www.texastreetrails.org

The President's Corner continued from page 1

I would like to focus on education this year and one of the best ways to learn about native plants is to help at one of our demonstration gardens. You learn their growth habits, how to maintain them and how to use them in your landscape. **We pass along our excess plants—come join us!**

To help us learn more about natives at our meetings, I'm planning to feature my special "Plant of the Month" and "Bring your Mystery Plant." Do you have a plant you can't identify? Photograph it or better yet bring it with you and we'll see if we can identify it. We have a number of people who are good at plant identification and it will be a good learning experience for all of us.

One of the ways we can share our love of native plants is our outreach at the home-and-garden shows. Thanks to Ann Trenton, Anne Alderfer, Hester Schwarzer, Donna Morris, Evaline Woodrey, Joyce Miller, Joe Sanders, Carol Wester, Molly Hollar, Jan Miller, Ellen Baskerville, Pat Lovejoy, Dawn Hancock, and Gailon Hardin for helping at the Howard Garrett Show. Our booth was really neat and we handed out lots and lots of plant lists. **Remember to look for the signup sheet for the upcoming Fort Worth Home & Garden Show on February 18, 19, 20, at our February meeting. Sign up and join us; you'll be surprised how enjoyable it is!**

This Presidency thing is a very new experience for me. I promise I will give it my all and hope you will help me make this a great year for the North Central Chapter of NPSOT by sharing your thoughts and ideas and volunteering to help whenever you can. **Remember: An organization is only as good as its member participation.**

Pat

Garden Cuttings Gailon Hardin

Well, it's February and what do we do in the garden? We sit in an easy chair with a good hot beverage and get inspired by a good horticultural book, magazine, or catalog to plan for the upcoming spring. However, for NPSOT members the winter months bring gardening opportunities. Not only is it time to prune the autumn sage, *Salvia greggii*, but natives can be transplanted with minimal effort at this time of year. It's a time to move plants around within existing gardens in order to fine-tune a design or color combination. Why not add a few unique plants to your garden by hunting for and salvaging plants from sites that will be developed? Please get permission first from the owner or developer.

Many shrubs and small trees can easily be identified and moved by the novice gardener. With a little more knowledge, we can identify many perennials, biennials, and annuals from their winter rosettes or their residual stubble. Plants with thick, fleshy roots, tubers, bulbs, or rhizomes like *Penstemon cobaea*, *Liatris spp.*, *Asclepias spp.*, *Callirhoe involucrata*, *Engelmannia pinnatifida*, and *Silphium albiflorum*, to name a few, can actually be bare-rooted if dug properly. The key to a successful transplant is not to let the roots dry out. Bring plastic trash bags, ziplock bags or the appropriate sealable containers for the hunt, then plant the "goods" as soon as possible; water to minimize large air gaps around the roots of the newly planted; and then mulch, being careful not to cover the crowns of the new additions. Transplants done in late fall and early winter have higher survival rates than those transplanted in the spring. Remember to move plants of one soil type and exposure to the same or similar soil and aspect. Although plants from blackland prairie soil types may adapt to crosstember soil types, the reverse is less likely to succeed. So now you know what NPSOT members do during the winter.



Silphium albiflorum,
White-flowered rosinweed

Smart Start Your Yard with Natives!

The North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas is pleased to welcome Rosa Finsley, well known Texas Native Landscape Architect, for a three-part workshop on the use of native plants in your landscape. Rosa will present workshops at our April 14 and May 12 meetings with a June 9 Walking Workshop through the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park, Arlington.

Fee: \$45 (Free to NPSOT-NCC members) Information: Taylor Stephens-Parker 817-784-6003 or soilnurse@earthlink.com.

Help Wanted

Designs in Nature, an organic tree farm, is hiring temporary help for spring, mid-February through mid-June. Please contact Gailon Hardin for an application. 817-457-4703 home, 817-475-0923 cell.

Granbury Road Subcourthouse *Gailon Hardin*



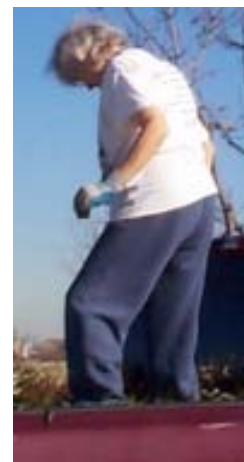
It was an absolutely beautiful winter day to begin our winter pruning of natives at the Subcourthouse on Granbury Road in Fort Worth. Previously, we pruned the 10,000-square-foot garden entirely, then mulched. This year we will prune two of the four sections at a time and mulch after each. We hope this will be a better plan.

Four brave souls showed up, pruners in hand. Arnie O'Donnell tackled the aster and picture sage, while Dawn Hancock gave the blackfoot daisy and Mexican petunia a trim. Pat Lovejoy and I addressed the zexmenia, rock rose and blue mistflower, then we noticed that those petunias were invading other areas. Imagine that. With syncopated vigor, we all pushed up our sleeves, grabbed the sharpshooters and pounced on that darned Mexican petunia like rat terriers pursuing a furry find.

The petunias were between rocks, in the decomposed granite, hidden in the little bluestem and in the fragrant sumac. They put up quite a fight, and we didn't realize how much we had dug until we loaded the truck with the debris to be composted off site. I threw the clippings in the truck, Dawn stomped, and Arnie got a good laugh.

We left the autumn sage alone to be pruned in February. Since it's evergreen, a pruning now would encourage new growth and suffer in a freeze. We left the little bluestem for winter interest, and it will be pruned in February, too. The little bluestem has increased, so we dug some and shared with volunteers. There's always lots to share with volunteers who come out on workdays.

Our workdays are the second Saturday and the last Tuesday of each month. Please come help maintain the garden and learn about natives.



Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park *John Dycus (Adapted from the Post Oak, Jan-Feb 2005)*

Good news, death-to-privet pals. You have pretty much cut, chopped, shredded and in all ways abhorred the wily weed into oblivion at the Molly Hollar Wildscape. Thanks to the Arlington Parks and Recreation Department, especially Jay Falgout and Martin Sanchez, the blasting of the privet by APRD workers is off to a roaring start.

The first day they cleared almost all of an entire section with the help of super wildscape volunteer Anne Alderfer. Anne worked alongside the parks crew on the coldest, windiest day you can imagine, wielding the team's heaviest flora yanker to pull the monsters from the muddy ground. After getting well warmed up and uprooting lots of the big privets, Anne gave a gigantic pull on the weed wrench handle and landed on her backside in the mud. Unfazed, she jumped up and went back to work with co-supervisor Molly Hollar, who was pulling up 6-inch baby privets.

At the end of the day, Anne was one exhausted volunteer—but three days later, she was at it again! Bypassing the small, easy privet, she attacked the straggler villains from the parking lot to the pavilion boardwalk. Using that same Desert Storm weed wrench, she eradicated all remaining privet in the area. The APRD privet brigade will resume operation Jan. 4, 7 a.m. until about 3 in the afternoon, and will stick with it each Tuesday until the privet is no more. That could be as early as March or April, depending on how the weather cooperates.

Back at the greenhouse, thousands of baby plants are popping out of their seeds or sprouting roots on their cuttings. About 20 varieties of native perennials, including columbines, fall asters, butterfly weeds, purple coneflower, mealy blue sage, winecups and blackfoot daisies, will be transplanted into the wildscape or sold at the wildscape annual plant sale. In the ground cover section, frogfruit, golden groundsel, horseherb, wood violets and others are vining like crazy as they race to be the first to cover their pots. Turk's cap, flame acanthus, lantana, salvia greggii and esperanza are stretching skyward, trying to catch up with the Mexican buckeyes, Carolina buckthorns and roughleaf dogwoods.

While the volunteers got a little time off during the holidays, the plants continued to grow and need water. On the last greenhouse workday of the year, volunteers uncoiled the hose in the greenhouse only to find ... no water! It had been turned off temporarily due to a broken main. Greenhouse volunteers Glenn Troutman and Harry Arber saved the day by repeatedly hauling water from the nearby armory in Harry's pickup and then hand-sprinkling the entire greenhouse until the thousands of plants had been nourished.

All went well until Christmas Eve morning when loyal propagation volunteer Gailon Hardin, bundled up against the cold, tried to climb the tall stockade fence at the greenhouse (the gate refused to open) so she could water again. Balanced precariously, scarf flying in the wind, she desperately needed a ladder, which soon arrived with another volunteer. Heather Dowell, the city's splendid greenhouse liaison, was called to try to ensure that the water had been turned back on. In the end, Gailon's efforts were for nought, since the water was still off. The watering eventually happened December 27.

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

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 10

7:00 pm

Fort Worth Botanic Gardens

Sarah Bjornson

and Courtney Blevins

will present

Texas Tree Trails:

**Finding, Cataloguing, and
 Saving Area Historic Trees**

Visit us on the Web at
www.txnativeplants.org

Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

We invite you to become 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

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City, State, Zip: _____

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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.

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The Texas Sage is printed on recycled paper.