



# THE TEXAS SAGE

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter  
Volume 17, Number 7  
September 2005

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## The President's Corner *Pat Lovejoy*

Members and Friends,

Our special thanks to Anita Mills and June Covington from the Domestic Arts Heritage Center for presenting a great program on how to make dye from native plants. Who would have thought that green leaves from a pecan tree would make brown dye or that dye from bluebonnets isn't blue but yellow. I sure will look at plants, and especially trees, differently from now on. Aren't we lucky to have people like Anita and June who love to share what they've learned with groups like ours.

We recently received a letter from the Fort Worth Botanical Society asking for monetary support for the new Texas Native Forest Boardwalk at the Botanic Gardens. If you haven't seen it, it is an elevated boardwalk with viewing platforms, educational decks and paths connecting major features of the Botanic Gardens and preserving this native forest. The Board recommended we contribute \$1,000 to this project, and the members present at our August meeting approved their recommendation. This contribution will enable us to have our name on a plaque at the boardwalk which will be a constant reminder of our support of this project. I hope you will all take a minute to visit the boardwalk and see what a wonderful addition it is to the Botanic Gardens.

I would like to thank Anne Alderfer, Vicki Brady, Wendy Herbst, Laura Penn, Hester Schwarzer, John Snowden, and Taylor Stephens-Parker for answering the call from NPSOT to help with the booth at the Texas Nursery and Landscape Association show. Our chapter was well represented and I greatly appreciate your help spreading the word on natives.

That leads me to another request. We could sure use your help with our booth at the Fort Worth Home Show on September 30, October, 1 and 2. Outreach is a very important part of our mission "to promote the conservation, research and utilization of the native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example." If you can help, please contact Anne Alderfer at 817-457-0972.

I hope you will join us for our September meeting with Dar Richardson. Dar is a member of the Williamson County NPSOT Chapter and is the NPSOT Chapter Liaison for the state. Dar will speak on propagating native plants. As a plant propagator myself, I'm really eager to hear what Dar has to teach us.

*continued on page 2*



August meeting: Thursday, September 8, 7:00 pm, Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Orchid Room

Dar Richardson, the instructor responsible for propagation at the Gabriel Valley Farms Nursery in Jonah, Texas, will speak on growing your own plants from cuttings or seeds. Gabriel Valley Farms is a wholesale nursery that specializes in herbs, perennials, and Texas native plants. Dar volunteers at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center where he propagates plants in the Center's nursery.

Learn how commercial growers successfully grow their plant stock. Most of their techniques can be used by the home gardener. Contact Anne Alderfer 817-457-0972 for more information.

## The President's Corner *continued from page 1*

Also, start thinking about what plant you want to bring to our annual plant swap at the October meeting. I have so many wonderful natives I want to pass along, I'm having a hard time deciding what to bring. This is always a FUN meeting.

One more thing, don't forget the native plant sale at the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park on October 1, 1:00 – 5:00 pm. Watch your e-mail for more info on this, or contact Taylor Stephens-Parker at [soilnurse@earthlink.net](mailto:soilnurse@earthlink.net) or me at [patlovejoy@att.net](mailto:patlovejoy@att.net).

See you at the September meeting,

Pat

## Garden Cuttings *Gailon Hardin*

Now is the time to start preparing for a fall garden or an area for a new garden to plant in the spring. Begin by killing the perennial weeds and grasses—they're growing actively from the rain we received the second week in August and will respond to several methods of eradication.

Spraying a glyphosphate like Roundup is effective, but it sterilizes the soil. I do not recommend using chemicals that are so harmful to the environment and there are alternatives.

Solarization might be an option. The area to be turned into your flowering Mecca is delineated by digging a trench around it to a depth greater than the roots of your problem weed. After spraying the area with water, a continuous layer of clear 6-mil poly is put on top of the potential bed. The edges of the plastic should fall into the trench and then be covered with soil, brick, rocks, or your mother-in-law to seal the area tightly (just making sure you're paying attention). The soil temperature under the plastic is supposed to rise high enough to kill everything within six inches of the surface. The drawback is that this process takes about two to three months; if October and November are cool, the process may not work.

Another alternative is the newspaper method. Cover the delineated area (an area is delineated by surrounding the site with an impenetrable edge) with several layers of newspaper, making sure to overlap and cover the area tightly. Apply a foot of hot animal-based compost or, if you cannot find hot compost, add 4" of mulch over the newspaper. If you use the mulch method, you can be creative here. Before you apply the mulch, you can add refined sugar, dried molasses, animal-based fertilizer or anything organic. The idea is to add things that will increase the microbial activity in the soil. Do not add synthetic fertilizers. Synthetics are NPK sprayed on a carrier, and the carrier is salt. Salt is not good for the soil or the environment.

If you are not looking to start another garden area and September does not bring cooler weather, sit back with a cool beverage and enjoy nature at work.

## Volunteers Needed

**Home Show:** Volunteers are needed to help with our booth at the upcoming Fort Worth Home Show on September 30, October 1 and 2. Anyone interested in helping, please contact Anne Alderfer at 817-457-0972 or [easea@swbell.net](mailto:easea@swbell.net). Remember: *If everyone helps a little, no one has to do it all!*

**Logo:** We need an artist—professional or amateur—to draw a yucca for our new logo. If you're interested please contact Gailon Hardin at 817-457-4703 or [ghardin@flash.net](mailto:ghardin@flash.net).

## BRIT Fall 2005 Distinguished Lecture Series: Plants that changed the world

September 8, "An Empire of Plants: People and Plants that Changed the World", Toby Musgrave, author

October 13, "King Cotton: A Revolutionary Fiber", Frank K Wilson, Dallas Historical Society

November 3, "The Evil Influence of the Lazy Root: Social History through the Potato's Eyes", Larry Zuckerman, author

All lectures are held at the Ft Worth Botanic Gardens, Leonhardt Auditorium, 7 pm.

## Special Raffle Thanks:

Redenta's Gardens - \$25 gift certificate  
 Designs in Nature - Chisos rosewood  
 Gailon's Gardens - desert willows  
 Helena VanHeiningen - Mexican plum  
 Molly Hollar - Mexican butterfly weed

Vicki Brady - agave and cactus  
 Anne Alderfer - book on dye  
 Jeannie Browning - rock rose  
 And anyone we might have forgotten.

Thanks also to all who bought a ticket. This helps us cover our meeting room expenses. We appreciate your continued support.

## Big Bend Symposium News

The 2005 NPSOT Symposium is full. The 220 slots were filled in 3 weeks and there is already a waiting list of 55 applications.

## Arlington's SmartYard Contest: First Look

We don't yet know who won what in the SmartYard Contest, but organizer Roni Crotty has agreed to give us a look at some of the entries submitted by NPSOT members. No names, but you know who you are, and we all know that these yards don't just get by on looks, they're smart too.



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

## Next Meeting

**Thursday, September 8**

7:00 pm

Fort Worth Botanic Gardens

Dar Richardson  
 Gabriel Valley Farms Nursery

**Growing your own plants  
 from cuttings or seeds**

Visit us on the Web at  
[www.txnativeplants.org](http://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

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.

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