



N P S O T

**North Central Texas
News**

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter
Volume 20, Number 8, October 2008

The President's Corner *Hester Schwarzer*

Hooray for Autumn

A favorite interlude of cool evenings and days still warm but tolerable has arrived. Evenings can be enjoyed out-of-doors alone or with friends and pets. Native grasses are showing their fall splendor, sunflowers and goldenrod brighten road-sides, and there is an occasional tinge of autumn color.

This is the best of times for plant sales and garden shows and long walks. As we survey our little spot on this earth, dreams come easily. A sweep of tall grass would make a nice backdrop for the bluebonnets I'll sow tomorrow. There bur oak acorns will sprout and in my lifetime become a gigantic shade for all to enjoy. Several understory plants are needed to supply more cover and food for the winter birds and those just passing through. And so the dreaming goes. A few hours at the sales and shows and walks leaves us with notebooks filled with ideas, cars filled with plants and supplies, and pockets filled with seeds.

This early planting time is valuable. How can we use these golden days to better our personal space and extend our influence into the community? We could share seeds and plant divisions with a neighbor. Friends should be encouraged to go with use on our excursions. Children will often be our willing helpers as we dig and plant. Reach out and touch as many people as possible this autumn. Next summer they may be more comfortable wit the wildness of some sections of your landscape and more willing to try something new themselves.

These are heady, magical days with much promise and pleasure. Enjoy!

Help Wanted

We need help from a talented member to fill the post of Historian. If you're interested, contact Hester Schwarzer at 817-861-4909 or hwschwarzer@aol.com.



**Don't miss the
plant sale!
See page 5.**

October meeting

Thursday, October 2, 7:00 pm,
Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Deborah Beggs Moncrief
Garden Center, Leonhardt Lecture Hall

NOTE: Instead of our regular meeting, we will attend the BRIT Lecture: Green Roofs from Prairie Barrens: Inviting the Fort Worth Prairie into the City. Presented by Tony Burgess, Ph.D. Professor of Professional Studies, The Institute for Environmental Studies, Texas Christian University.

Visit us at
npsot.org and
txnativeplants.org

Annual NPSOT Meeting

Yes, the Beaumont meeting is on despite the hurricane, and you can still “Go wild in the Thicket” from October 16-19 at the annual symposium and meeting. All the details can be found at *npsot.org*. Visit the site now and register today.

Seed Sharing

We won't share our seeds on October 2 because we'll be attending the BRIT lecture down the hall instead.

Fall Botanic Garden Plant Sale

Saturday, October 11, 2008

9:00 am to 2:00 pm

On the grounds of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden. See page 5 to learn what we will be doing there.

Plant of the Month *Josephine Keeney*

Fall Obedient Plant, *Physostegia virginiana*. Lamiaceae (Mint Family)



large area of the U.S., but in our state it is native to East and North Central Texas, growing on riverbanks, wet thickets, prairies and swamps.

It is easily propagated by division and by rooted cuttings. It is also deer resistant making it a big plus for many people. Butterflies and hummingbirds love the flowers.

All these good qualities make the Fall Obedient Plant very desirable in the home garden.

There are six other species of *Physostegia* that are native to Texas:

Beautiful False Dragonhead, *Physostegia pulchella*, which is an endemic Narrowleaf False Dragonhead, *Physostegia angustifolia*

Correll's False Dragonhead, *Physostegia correllii*
False Dragonhead, *Physostegia digitalis*
Slender False Dragonhead,

Physostegia intermedia
Longsepal False Dragonhead, *Physostegia longisepala*

Editor's note: You really should visit Josephine's marvellous Web site, www.texasstar.org. It's a forum for Texas gardeners, dedicated to the cultivation and propagation of Texas native plants and wildflowers.

This attractive plant blooms in September and October and paints the landscape in lovely shades of pink.

A robust perennial, fall obedient plant has a tendency to spread in moist places but is very easy to pull and thin out. It can tolerate sun or shade and grows on a tall square stem up to four feet tall. The flowers grow on a spike about six inches long and look like snapdragons, with two lobes on the upper lip and three on the bottom.

If the flower spike is bent it tends to stay that way for a while, hence the name obedient plant.

This plant grows over a very



Butterflies Jo Ann Karges

October as Butterfly Serendipity Month

Veteran butterfly-watchers regard October as “serendipity month” because one never knows what butterflies might drift in from the south—even from the Lower Rio Grande Valley—to nectar on our garden flowers. Actually, the unexpected this year began in early August, a year that otherwise has seemed bereft of butterflies. White-angled Sulphurs (1, *Anteos clorinde*), large white creatures with yellow-orange spots on the upperside of their angled forewings, in an unusual phenomenon exploded in many areas across the state and began appearing in this area as well. Near-

relatives on cue have also appeared, two large golden orange: the Large Orange Sulphur (2) and the Orange Barred Sulphur (3), not to be confused with our resident Cloudless Sulphur (4), which is more lemon-yellow. (Note though: the female of the Large Orange is almost white.)

Other serendipitous species to watch for:

Common Mestra (5), a delicate white butterfly which nectars with spread wings showing the bright orange on the tips of its lower wings.

Julia Longwing (6), brilliant orange wings much like the Gulf

Fritillary in shape.

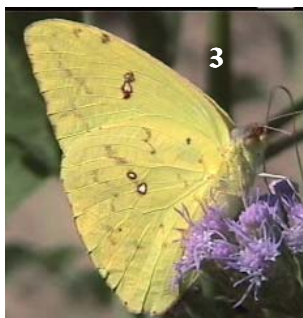
The Soldier (7), cousin to the Monarch and similar in appearance, though darker, more like the Queen.

The Hermit Skipper (8). A spread-wing skipper with distinctive markings.

The Sickle-winged Skipper (9). A spread-winged skipper with definite curved points at tips of upper wings.

Of course, it is also the time of the massive migrations of Monarchs, and we should be watching for them in flight, nectaring, and at night roosting in shrubs and trees. (A few female Monarchs may even oviposit on our milkweed, though most of the migrating Monarchs are not in reproductive state.)

Nothing can be predicted for certain, but we should be watching for strays from the south. Look for them especially on tithonia, lantana, and mistflower.



New York Avenue Prairie Jan Miller



The Second Wave at NYABP

Editor's note: We hear that Arlington Parks & Recreation

Department has mowed the prairie since Jan wrote this piece.)



As Jim Varnum noted in his recent newsletter, "the second wave is underway". That's the colorful fall surge of prairie wildflowers. After a brief lull for the heat of summer, the swell started last month at NYABP, with the distinctive blooms of snow-on-the-prairie, royal purple ironweed,



sky-blue pitcher sage, and the lovely but unexpected bluebells. This month we'll see vibrant yellow goldenrods and Maximilian sunflowers, then white asters and still later, frost will bring the final bronzed hues of the tall grasses. Riding this wave of blooms are the bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, other critters eager for the nectar and seeds that will sustain them through fall and winter. It's a busy, colorful time. Hope you can visit the prairie and watch the action.

Speaking of action, contact jgmiller5594@sbcglobal.net for an e-mail notice about the next workday in October.

For some volunteer inspiration, take a look at the video on the Katy Prairie Preserve Conservancy website www.katyprairie.org to see their amazing rescue project at the

Saums Road Prairie. As that site will soon become a freeway, their 'Flat Out Wonderful' volunteers have staged a series of workdays to dig rare coastal prairie plants. They are also raising funds to continue rescue efforts on a large scale, using tree spades and industrial sod cutting equipment to remove huge chunks of intact prairie sod.

ACC has a special invitation from Eileen Porter (she organized the May fieldtrip to the Fort Worth Prairie Park) and Weatherford's



Cross Timbers Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT): Come hear about *Rare Plants of Texas* from co-author Jason Singhurst on Thursday, November 13 at 6:30 pm at Harberger Hill Community Building 701 Narrow Street, Weatherford. (If interested in carpooling, contact jgmiller5594@sbcglobal.net.)

Jason will review his book, tell us who funded the work, and why Texas Parks and Wildlife initiated the project. He will discuss several rare plants in North Texas, their biology and habitat restrictions, and what we can do to help conserve rare plants and the biodiversity of Texas flora.

Native Plant Sale

by the

North Central Chapter
Native Plant Society of Texas

Saturday, October 11, 2008
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Location:

Booth at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden's annual
Fall Plant Sale

Fort Worth Botanic Garden,

In "The Grove", the wooded area west of the Trial Garden and
the

Japanese Garden parking lot.

Parking/Directions:

From I-30, take the Montgomery Street exit (#11)
follow the signs North on Montgomery to Linden Street
turn right to parking lot at end of street

Parking is free

Next Meeting

Thursday, October 2
7:00 pm
Fort Worth
Botanic Gardens

BRIT Lecture:
Green Roofs from
Prairie Barrens
Tony Burgess,
TCU

Visit us on the Web
at
www.txnativeplants.org

Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

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 with the appropriate remittance to:

Native Plant Society of Texas
PO Box 3017, Fredricksburg, TX 78624
830-997-9272

_____ Student	\$15	_____ Couple/Family	\$40
_____ Senior Individual		_____ Group	\$50
_____ (65+)	\$20	_____ Patron	\$100
_____ Senior Couple		_____ Benefactor	\$250
_____ (one 65+)	\$30	_____ Supporting	\$500
_____ Individual	\$25	_____ Corporate Sponsor	\$1000
		_____ Lifetime	\$1000

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 County: _____
 Phone: _____
 Chapter Affiliation: North Central Chapter
 e-mail: _____

The North Central Texas NPSOT News

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
817-274-1077
ldarling@sbcglobal.net