August Meeting  
Thursday, August 4, 2016, 6:30 pm  
Orchid Room, Deborah Briggs Moncrief Garden Center  
Fort Worth Botanic Gardens

Propagation Techniques

Gailon Hardin, Josephine Keeney, and Martha Mullens

This month’s educational activity will be presented by members of NPSOT and will be geared toward the fall plant sale.

Gailon Hardin will demonstrate how to build a hoop house and a cold frame.

Josephine Keeney will demonstrate plant division by taking apart some plants.

Martha Mullens will demonstrate different methods of handling, storing and planting seeds. She will briefly discuss formation, makeup, types, and dispersal of seeds; how to tell when seeds are ready to harvest; how to prepare seeds (if necessary); when and how to plant; and how to store them.

We hope that these techniques will be helpful to our plant sale growers.
The President’s Corner  Starr Krottinger

Beginner Plants:  You only need one!
You just never know what I’m going to share in this space, do you? Me neither! What is on my mind today is what I am calling Beginner Plants. Sometimes when you are first getting involved in a new activity, it helps to keep you motivated if you have some early success, and the plants I’m sharing with you today will give you that success, and sometimes even extra plants to share!

Of course I have to include a grass, and that is Inland sea oats (Chasmanthium latifolium). This is one of the few grasses that will grow well in shaded areas. It gets to be about 3 feet tall, has bamboo-like foliage and chevron-shaped drooping seed heads that turn a golden color in the fall. I have some on the north side of my house in an area that doesn’t get much summer sun, and it is very happy there. In fact it is so happy I am constantly pulling up seedlings from between the flagstones!

Once established it doesn’t need much if any extra watering.

Rock Rose (Pavonia lasiopetala) is another plant that will grow for even the blackest of thumbs! It is a perennial shrub with pink blossoms that loves the sun, heat, and abuse of a Texas summer. If it gets too big you can cut it back and it will just keep blooming. This too will self propagate by seedlings all around the mother plant.

And everyone loves Autumn sage (Salvia greggii) which, with just a little attention, will bloom all summer long. Once this is planted, about all you have to do is trim it back to keep it from getting leggy and scraggly looking. It does not self propagate as readily as Rock rose and Inland sea oats, but every now and then you will find a baby growing nearby.

Lyreleaf sage (Salvia lyrata) can be used as a ground cover, and if there was ever a plant that you only needed one of to get started, this is it! The leaves will often have purple veining and grow close to the ground, and the pale blue blossoms seem to float about the leaves on a tall stalk. Once it has bloomed you can clip or weed-whack the stalks to keep the area tidy.

I am certain those in our group who have green native plant thumbs could tell you more about these plants and others, but I can guarantee you will have success with these, and in a very short time will have the confidence to move on to trickier plants. Any extra plants that grow at your house that you don’t want can be potted and with just a little attention you can add them to the inventory for the fall plant sale. I hope you enjoy trying these easy peasy plants!
This is the plant for you if you are looking for a beautiful perennial that can take the Texas heat and survive with very little water and care. I have never seen it bothered by insects or disease in the fifteen years that I have been growing native plants. That really means a lot, and it is something that can hardly be said about other hardy plants.

This shrub is deciduous and has light colored brittle wood. Flame acanthus is cold hardy in the DFW area and likes to wait for the weather to warm up before putting on new growth in the spring. The new stems are square and the leaves are small and light green, growing opposite each other with no serration on the edges. The bloom period is from June to frost in this area of North Central Texas.

Flame acanthus can be pruned or sheared to suit your desired size or shape. The plant bounces back quickly and rewards you with many bright tubular orange-red blooms that attract attention from far away. But if all these virtues weren’t enough, the striking flowers attract all the hummers and butterflies in the neighborhood, making it a delight to watch.

It also happens to be a host plant for the Crimson Patch, Texan Crescent and Cyna Blue butterflies.

When you consider all these good points, you will agree that Flame acanthus should have a very special place in the yard and especially in the butterfly garden.

Find more native plant information at www.texasstar.org, a forum for Texas gardeners dedicated to the cultivation and propagation of Texas native plants.
July in Dawn’s Yard  Dawn Hancock

Seed time. The coneflowers, White avens, Monarda, Virginia sweetspire, Lyreleaf sage, Cedar sage, Winecup, Columbine, Mexican feather grass, and Chili pequin have gone to seed, and I impatiently wait for the seed to ripen for harvest. I will let the birds have the chili pequin, but I check the Monarda almost daily in hopes of harvesting. I have never seen Monarda fistulosa in the nursery trade, but it is pretty enough to be a good seller, I think. So I wait with my paper bag and pruners at the ready to harvest those seeds to send out to other NPSOTers’ gardens.

It’s coming: the hot, hot. Orange and gold petals of Lantana, red twisted petals of Turk’s cap, hot pink of Rock rose, purple crochet work of Passion flower, and the sweet tiny purple bells of Clematis.

This is the Clematis’ first year of being a mature vine. I have trained it to grow up and twist around the post on one side of my tiny front porch, then across to the other side.

Butterflies: So far this year I have seen Red admirals, Gulf fritillaries, Giant swallowtails, Pipevine swallowtails, skippers, Question marks, and the small hairstreak.

Dragonflies: Big reds, slender dainty blues, and black banded-wing biggies.

Reptiles: Fence lizards too numerous to count. These guys are cheeky. I had one eyeball to eyeball while weeding, but he did not give an inch. A few geckos. Anoles running the top pole of the chain link fence and stopping to claim this pole by fanning the pinky-red gular pouch.

Amphibians: I thought I had lost my frogs but no, about three weeks ago, I heard them singing their courtship melodies and now the pond is pollywog nursery. I love these little guys. Besides being cute they are like vacuum cleaners on the algae.

Squirrels: They’re everywhere, toying with my dogs by coming almost within reach then scampering back up the pine trees, leaving a very frustrated dog behind. Each morning is a bombing raid on the deck. Squirrels above dropping half-eaten pine cones on anyone within range below. On the bright side, the clutter makes good mulch.

Workdays

Southwest Subcourthouse on Granbury Road in Fort Worth: second Saturday and last Wednesdays of each month beginning at 9:00 am. Gailon Hardin and Dawn Hancock in charge.

Hulen Street Regional Library in Fort Worth: second and fourth Thursday of each month 9:00 am till 12:00. Theresa Thomas and Char McMorrow in charge.

Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park in Arlington: Wednesdays and fourth Saturday of each month 9:00 am – 12:00. Also, Tuesdays 9:00 am – 12:00 at the greenhouse in Randol Mill Park in Arlington.
Plants Needed for Courthouse Sale  Gailon Hardin and Dawn Hancock

We will have a plant sale at the Tarrant County Southwest Sub-courthouse this fall. We plan to sell only species planted at the sub-courthouse and to have tours of the garden. A tentative date is the third week in October, Native Plant Week. Check the list below, and if you can donate any plants, bring them to the August, September and October meetings. This will help support the native plant demonstration garden.

Thanks,
Gailon and Dawn, SWSC Co-chairs

American Agave, *Agave americana*
Autumn sage, *Salvia greggii*
Blackfoot daisy, *Melampodium leucanthum*
Chile Pequine, *Capsicum annum*
Desert willow, *Chilopsis linearis*
Fall aster, *Symphyotrichum oblongifolium*
Flame acanthus, *Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*
Gaura, *Gaura lindheimeri*
Gayfeather, *Liatris pycnostachya*
Goldenball leadtree, *Leucaena retusa*
Goldenrod, *Solidago canadensis*
Gregg’s mistflower, *Conoclinium greggii*
Gulf muhly, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*
Lindheimer’s muhly, *Muhlenbergia lindheimeri*
Little Bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*
Low wild petunia, *Ruellia humilis*
Mexican petunia (non native), *Ruellia brittoniana*
Milkweed, *Asclepia*spp
Pale purple coneflower, *Echinacea pallida*
Pink evening primrose, *Oenothera speciosa*
Pitcher sage, *Salvia azurea*
Purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpurea*
Red yucca
Rock rose, *Pavonia lasiopetala*
Skeleton-leaf goldeneye, *Viguiera stemoloba*
Snake Herb, *Dyschoriste linearis*
Texas lantana, *Lantana urticoides*
Texas Sage, *Leucophyllum frutescens*
Western Ironweed, *Vernonia baldwinii*
Wild petunia, *Ruellia nudiflora*
Wright’s skullcap, *Scutellaria wrightii*
Zexmenia, *Wedelia hispida*
New Monarch Waystation in the Works  Kim Conroe

The mission of the Native Plant Society of Texas is to promote research, conservation and utilization of native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example.

What happens when you have a NPSOT member who has internalized the mission of the society and she is confronted with a public space that is in desperate need of landscaping help?

A Monarch Waystation of course!

On July 6, my husband Ray and I decided to get busy and start up our swimming for exercise in the summer. We have pursued this habit at the TCC South pool over the last several semesters. The lifeguard there told us about the Forest Park pool where the lanes are twice as long. As I waited for Ray to emerge from the locker room I chit-chatted with the police officer who was standing nearby. “Gosh,” I said, “That area really needs some help! It could benefit from just a few plants.” “Oh,” says he, “The pool director is right in there. Please talk about this with him.” And I did.

Mr. Alex Ritzhaupt was so excited to have someone with an idea who was willing would help him out. “Yes, the plaque area needs help, and come have a look at this area and see if you have any ideas about it. I have some funds to spend on the landscaping,” says he. Well, of course I was very confident that I could come up with an overall plan for the entire area he wanted landscaped: the plaque area, another spot off the side of the walkway, and an approximately 20 by 50 foot area with dappled shade and hot moving sun spots. Native plants will save the day!

It was all I could think about while swimming the eight 100-meter laps. That evening I sent out a plea for help to the NPSOT-NC Board. My confidence was waxing. Dawn Hancock could meet me there in one day’s time. We met, we planned, we measured, we photographed, we wrote down our thoughts. I got too much sun exposure and felt ill for two days. The hazards of outdoor gardening caught up with me. Only days before I had been stung by a yellow jacket on my lip and had to take steroids. Folks, just an FYI here: Steroids and the hot sun do not mix well sometimes.

After percolating the idea for a few more days, I developed a ten-page proposal with a landscape design, photographs of the areas, plant lists, plant descriptions and maintenance, hardscape list including an educational sign for the public, funding possibilities and references.
New Monarch Waystation continued from page 7

WHEW! It’s a work of art in my humble opinion. The Native Landscaping Certification Program Classes, I’ve taken gave me the skills to create a proposal that is truly worthy of becoming a reality.

Everything except for vendor pricing is in the proposal and ready for a meeting with higher-ups soon. Those should be received in time for inclusion. The proposal has been sent to several groups, and I have received promises of donations from several people. WOW! People are so amazing. The meeting with the Head Supervisor is just two weeks to the date that Ray and I decided to go out and swim.

So, my friends, speak up! Be ready to volunteer some time and make some effort because there are opportunities around us every day to further the mission of the Native Plant Society. As I write this, I’m not sure how much of the plan will become a reality. I hope a lot, because every time we have gone to swim, (2.5 swim miles of swimming so far) the lifeguards, the policemen, and the desk people want to hear the plans. They are happy and friendly and hopeful about seeing a beautiful landscape take root before their eyes.

The mission is good. People are waiting for the knowledge and encouragement. Speak up and be happy.

Photo Phile

Clockwise from left: American agave at Arlington Parks Dept office. Pipevine swallowtail at Fielder Museum butterfly garden. How to kill Post oaks in one easy step. Seedling germination test: top row is commercial seedling mix; bottom row is compost. Plants in compost look better, but compost dries out much faster than the mix.
Hello, everyone! We are very excited to announce the date and location for our plant sale.

The sale will be on **October 7 from 10 till 2**. The location is **The Pavilion at Randol Mill Park in Arlington**. This is a wonderful location, easily accessible from I-30 and easy to find from I-20.

We will have a covered pavilion with six tables. Outside there is a 48-foot wooden table that will hold many plants, plus 15 other metal tables so we will not be lacking space. All these outdoor tables are under beautiful post oaks.

There is a parking lot right by the pavilion with a ramp for loading and unloading, so you can pull right up and unload without having to carry plants a long way. Gailon and her helpers will check the plants as they arrive.

It will be very helpful if all of us bring our wagons or carts, since there won’t be other carts for us to use.

Another thing we can do is bring heavy cardboard boxes from stores like Costco for people to take their plants home in.

For the purpose of expediency at the sale and to save confusion we have decided to have three common pot sizes: 4 inch for $2.50, quart for $4.00 and gallon for $7.00. Larger pots and special plants will be priced as marked. If your pot is not one of the standard sizes, the price will round down to the next smaller pot size. Please try to pot your plants as close to standard sizes as possible.

Plants need to be potted at least six weeks before the sale to allow them to develop good roots. Of course, you can start potting up plants right now so they can grow big and beautiful by sale time.

As to soil, I know that it can be expensive so I use Landscaper’s mix at $3.48 per bag and Black Velvet topsoil at $2.77 from Lowes. This makes a large quantity of mix for $6.25.

I mix it at a 3-to-1 ratio, three parts landscapers mix to one part topsoil, using whatever measure you find handy. A one-gallon pot works well.

For fertilizer I use cotton seed meal, a high-nitrogen product that you can find at feed stores like Marshall Grain. A 50-pound bag costs about $15.00 and lasts a long time. I use it very lightly by sprinkling it on top of the soil in the pot when the plant looks like it needs a nitrogen boost. Of course, you can use compost or alfalfa meal or whatever you like, but don’t use artificial fertilizers as that would cancel out the organic part.

Remember that there is still time for many more members to sign up to grow plants. You can let me know by email or you can sign up at the August meeting.

Let us make this sale our best one ever!
Next Meeting
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7:00 pm
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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

___ Student  $25  ___ Family (2 or more) $50
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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 the newsletter is the 15th of every preceding month.

John Darling, Editor
newseditor@txnativeplants.org

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