

# CROSS TIMBERS CHAPTER

of the **NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY of TEXAS** to Promote the Conservation, research & utilization of the Native Plants and Plant Habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example.....

## Greetings From the President

We all had a great time at the plant Propagation workshop on Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. (12 people participated). Stuart Nursery and R&E Plants donated supplies. We may do another workshop in the spring. Look for more news on that later. There will be no meeting in December so we will see you January 10th, 2008 Have a happy holiday season !! Duane Smith---

## Meeting Minutes for November 8, 2007—

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by president Duane Smith. The program was given by Lee Ann Naves on Clark Gardens and Earth Kind Roses. Trey Evans was unable to come.

**New Business:** It was suggested we have a can at each meeting for donations to help defray costs for our speakers gas, etc. Also we will try the plant raffle again starting in January. Motion was made and seconded as such, motion carried.

**Old Business:** Nominating committee reported all current officers will serve for 2008. Officers are:

President-Duane Smith  
Vice President-Jan Daniels  
Treasurer-Linda Morgan  
Secretary-Kate Measures  
Webmaster-Bill Hopkins  
Newsletter-Jerry Reedy  
Publicity-Homer Babbitt  
Hospitality-Eileen Porter

Diane Bleau reported the Azle project will be on hold until next spring.

Jan Daniels reported on some of our speakers for next year. January speaker will be John Snowden on native grasses. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Kate Measures, Secretary

## Our Bank Account

As of 11-5-07 we have \$369.82 in petty cash after deducting our only expense to date of \$18.18 for badges.

## Field Sketching Workshop

Contact Diane Wetherbee of the Elm Fork Chapter, Texas Master Naturalists for more details on how the field sketching workshop turned out.

## The Maximilian sunflower

*Helianthus (maximillianii),*  
(hee-lee-AN-thus max-ih-mill-ANE-ee)

**The Flower & Fruit:** A member of the true sunflower family. A sunflower is actually hundreds of tiny flowers clustered together. These flowers have both male and female components. Short inflorescence stalks emerge from the leaf axils, bearing one composite flower head and one to two leaves. It's large, showy 3 to 4 inch bright golden yellow blooms in elongated clusters stacked one above another can occur throughout the full height of the plant. The plant adds a brilliant splash of color and texture to range sites, natural areas, and landscapes in great abundance during late summer and fall. They are great fresh cut flowers. Fruits are achenes that ripen in October and November and are wind or animal dispersed.

## Plant Distribution:

Maximilian sunflower is native to the central United States, from Ontario south to Texas. USDA hardiness zones 3 to 9. It may be sparsely introduced east and west of its native range. Common in NC Texas, and Edwards Plateau; infrequent in Plains.

## Plant Description:

Aster Family (Asteraceae). . This native perennial is a tall, warm season, spreading, perennial forb. It grows from 0.9 m to 2.5 m tall with stems occurring singly or in clusters from a perennial root crown and stout rhizomatous root system. The annual stems are produced from the underground roots. This growth pattern allows Maximilian sunflower to spread and form dense plant clusters, reinforcing soil and preventing erosion. The leaves are alternate, up to 30 cm long and 5 cm wide, sessile and lance-shaped.

The characteristic that distinguishes Maximilian sunflower from other *Helianthus* species is the grayish appearance given off by dense white hairs on the plant.

**Plant Habitat:** All along the highways you will see this spectacular flower . Although it can grow in a variety of conditions, it prefers moist clay-like soils but will grow in average soil with medium moisture and full sun. In drier regions it is found along streams and in seasonally moist drainage ditches. Growth is poor on gravel, dense clay, or saline soils. It tends to grow taller in moist rich soil.

**Plant Reproduction:** . This native sunflower is easy to grow and can be very aggressive and will dominate a planting as it reproduces by seed and roots (rhizomes). Seed germination is improved with a pretreatment of 3 to 4 weeks of cold moist stratification or when planted outside in the fall or early winter. Growth occurs in late spring and summer with some flowering by the end of the first season. Most Maximilian sunflower plants are not fully developed until the second season. You might want to remove the seed heads to control the spread of this flower where you do not wish to have it.

**Ornamental:** Use Maximilian sparingly in new plantings particularly in good soil so it will not take over the garden. The bright yellow flowers of Maximilian sunflower make it a popular choice for use in native gardens such as a meadow planting with native prairie grasses. It could make an attractive landscape plant if used as an accent plant in the back border of the flower garden, near a fence row, as a natural hedge or tall screen to block out harsh areas.

**Prairie Restoration**

Maximilian sunflower is used as a conservation planting for habitat development and prairie restoration. Maximilian sunflower exhibits fire tolerance in its dormant stage. Maximilian sunflower plants are allelopathic, they produce chemicals that hinder the growth of neighboring plants, but these chemicals are not harmful to livestock and wildlife.

**As a Range Plant:** It is used as an ingredient in seeding mixtures for range and pasture maintenance to provide a high quality forage for livestock, especially sheep and goats. Once established it will require little maintenance in range seeding situations. Be aware that overgrazing of a range site in which it is included will destroy the planting (commonly used as an indicator for overgrazing).

**For Wildlife:** . Maximilian sunflower is a useful food source and cover for wildlife as it has a long flowering period, a spreading habit, and a tendency to form thickets or large colonies.

Upland game birds, small non-game birds, and some waterfowl consume its seeds. While white-tailed deer browse this plant it is not a favorite food for deer. Rabbits feed on the young plants. Butterflies, beetles, and long- and short-tongued bees consume the nectar or pollen. Butterfly caterpillars feed on the foliage while moth caterpillars bore through the stems

**Cultivar:** Maximilian ‘Aztec’ was released from the Knox City (TX) Plant Materials Center in 1978 as a composite of five county collections from different parts of Texas to provide a widely adapted perennial forb for the purposes of wildlife food and cover, livestock forage, natural hedges, screens, filterstrips, and as ornamental landscape plants. ‘Aztec’ will perform best in areas receiving 18 inches or more annual precipitation.

**CROSS TIMBERS Member Perks**

**10% discount at Stuart's Nursery**

**CROSS TIMBERS Meetings**

We meet Second Thursday of the month except July-Aug & Dec at the Harberger Hill Community Building 701 Narrow St. in Weatherford, Texas Social at 6:30 P.M.

Come to Order at 7:00 P.M.

**STATE NPSOT OFFICE**

Web Site [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org)

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**OUR WEBSITE (case-sensitive)**

<http://www.npsot.org/CrossTimbersChapter>

To retrieve the Newsletter Select @ and open with MS Word or Adobe.

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/) has lots of information on native plants