

The Grama Gazette

Newsletter of the Native Plant Society of Texas
Garland Chapter

www.npsot.org/garland

Volume IX Issue VII

August 2007

Side Oats Notes

Hello, fellow native gardeners!

This has been the wettest, coolest summer in North Texas, but summer is finally here. You might think that our gardens would be big and beautiful with all the rain, but not all our plants have enjoyed this weather phenomenon. Many of our Texas natives thrive on heat and sun; they have not reached their potential this year. All the rain could have also washed away important nutrients from the soil. Using organic fertilizers and mulch, we can add back these essential nutrients.

One advantage to our very wet year has been the great butterfly population. My husband and I had the opportunity this weekend to visit Butterflies Unlimited, which is a butterfly farm in Glenn Heights, Texas owned by Dale Clark. It was truly inspiring. We saw other fellow native plant enthusiasts there.

In June, Peter Schaar came to speak about Woody Lilies. He had a beautiful slide show of ways to use these architectural plants in our gardens. Many of the beautiful slides were photos taken of Peckerwood Garden, which is located 50 minutes from downtown Houston and 2 hours from Austin off Highway 290. You can visit the Website to see more pictures of the garden <http://www.peckerwoodgarden.com/>

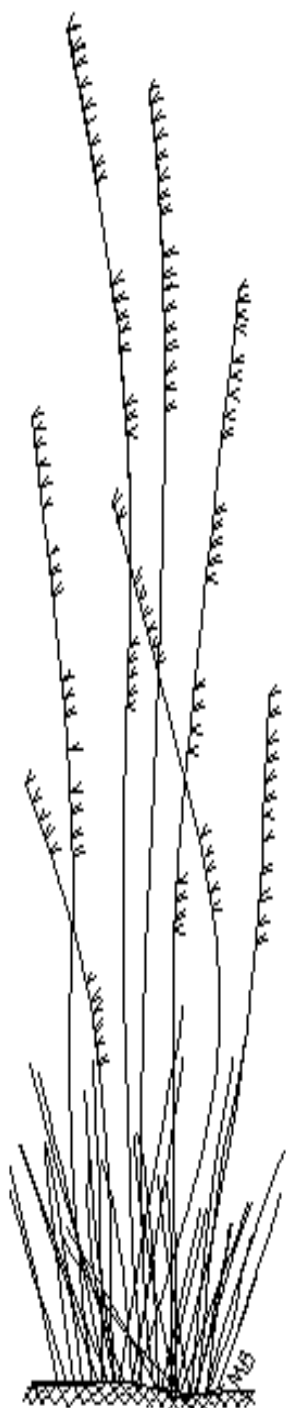
July, there was no Garland NPSOT meeting, but the Texas Discovery Gardens in Fair Park had a Native Plants Garden Walk on July 21st. Glenda, Butch, and I helped by handing out brochures and asking people to come to our meetings. It was a pleasant day and Melissa did a fantastic job highlighting the Benny Simpson plants and their benefits.

This month a Texas certified nursery professional and landscaping expert, Lindy Rainer, is coming to teach us about caring for our natives. She will answer questions such as when and how do we prune our native plants. She has solutions and remedies for questions and problems. Bring your questions, she will discuss and help us with our specific needs. She has been in the nursery business for many years and is a very knowledgeable resource.

Remember to bring plants for identification and for giveaways for the drawings.

Our meetings are open to all, so bring your friends! Help us spread the word on the benefits of planting natives.

Happy Gardening & Grow Native!
Donna G. Simon
Chapter President



Sideoats Grama

(*Bouteloua curtipendula*)

Enjoys full sun;
grows two to three feet tall
with attractive seed heads on
one side of the stem;
attracts birds and butterflies;
Is the state grass of Texas

Gulf Muhly (*Muhlenbergia* spp.)

Description:

Gulf muhly is a native, perennial bunchgrass that usually reaches a height of 1 ½ to 3 feet. It grows in tall clumps and has glossy deep-green leaves. During the mid-fall blooming season, purplish pink flowers arise from tall stems. The tiny flowers look like deep pink clouds. Gulf muhly usually blooms in mid-October. The bloom color fades as the grass becomes dormant in the winter. The plant also is known as pink muhly and purple muhly.

Planting Sites:

Can be planted in part shade or full sun. It prefers moist, well-drained sites, but withstands seasonal drought. Soil types it tolerates include sand, loam, and clay.

Planting Instructions:

Transplants should be planted 1 ½ to 2 feet apart. It is helpful to work organic matter such as compost into the native soil in the planting hole. Dig hole at least 2 times wider than, but the same depth as the root ball in the nursery container. Carefully remove plant from container, taking care not to break the root ball. Loosen exterior roots, if root bound. Plant at a depth equivalent to the thickness of soil in the container. Do not add any soil to the top of root ball. Adding a layer of 3-4 inches of mulch after planting is desirable. Gulf muhly can be sown as seed in the spring at the rate of 1 ½ to 2 lbs of live seed per 1000 sq. feet.

Watering Instructions:

After planting, water in well, using root stimulator according to directions. Repeat watering a few days after planting. Gulf muhly planted in shaded areas will require less water than those planted in full sun. The use of drip irrigation or a soaker hose is one option for watering during the hot, dry months. Reduce water during fall and winter. In a "normal" year, no watering may be necessary in fall and winter, but during a dry period, weekly watering may be desirable.

Other care:

Gulf muhly can be sheared back in the spring to promote growth and eventual blooming later in the year. Add compost and new mulch in the spring. A few feedings with an organic type fertilizer can be done during in the growing season. After a number of years, as the clump enlarges, there may be some die-off in the center of the plant. The original plant can be dug up and divided into smaller plants.



NICE! Tip:

Plant where light from the sunrise or sunset will backlight and highlight the blooms. It can be used as a mass planting in front of tall wildflowers such as Maximilian sunflowers for a dramatic effect. Gulf muhly can be planted on a terraced slope to help with soil erosion control. It is a very effective ornamental accent plant. Muhly grasses as a class are given the four-star rating by anyone that does have them, and should be planted more.

*Article excerpted from NPSOT Boerne Chapter NICE!



*Please join us for our March meeting of the
NPSOT, Garland Chapter,
Featuring:*

*Pruning and Caring for Natives
with
Lindy Rainer*

August 19, 2007
Meeting/Question & Answer Time at 2 pm
Program begins at 2:30 pm
Rohde's Nature Store and Nursery
1651 Wall Street
Garland
972-864-1934

Please bring a friend!



Community Events

Texas Discovery Gardens: 3601 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Fair Park. 214-428-7476 or visit the website at www.texasdiscoverygardens.org

EarthKind Environmental Stewardship Day Saturday, August 18 9am-4pm Free Admission

The Dallas County Master Gardeners and the Texas Cooperative Extension Service will present a whole day of talks, gardening demonstrations and guided tours at Texas Discovery Gardens. You will learn how to create a natural, healthy landscape that uses less water with plants that are native or adapted to our prairie soils. This event will be free to the public.

Volunteering for the State Fair The State Fair is approaching us rapidly and we will have lots of opportunities for volunteers in our Butterfly Habitat Garden and in our seasonal Butterfly House! Joan Youngblood is taking reservations so please direct all questions to her at 214-428-7476 ext. 27 jyoungblood@texasdiscoverygardens.org

Cedar Ridge Preserve – 7171 Mountain Creek Parkway , Dallas 75229

Conservation in Action Workday Saturday August 18, 2007 9:00 am- NOON

Come and join in the fun as we prune trails, lay mulch, weed in the butterfly garden, and build a gravel pad for a tractor and storage unit. We start at 9 a.m. and finish by 12 noon, but we would appreciate your help for even just part of that time. Water and snacks will be provided. Wear sturdy boots or shoes with good ankle support, bug & sun protection, and bring gloves if you have them though we will also have some available. Bring a friend! **For information and to tell us you are coming contact :** Jim Varnum at jevnum@aol.com

Seed Ball Making Session Saturday, September 8, 2007 9:00 AM - noon

Cedar Ridge Preserve and the North Texas Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist will be making seed balls for distribution about the CRP property. Seed balls are made from fine humus, seeds, red clay and water. You hand-roll them (it's fun!) into about 1/2-inch diameter spheres and let them dry. Later you sow them onto the prairie where they sit until it rains. Then the seeds are deposited onto the ground and eventually germinate.

Come on out and learn the exact recipe and make some seed balls for us and maybe a few for yourself, too. Bring your family and friends. Kids love to do this. If you have any wildflower or native grass seeds that we could use, just let us know. **For More Information contact :** Jim Varnum at jevnum@aol.com

Preservation Society for Spring Creek Forest

Workday Saturday, September 8 9:00 am Spring Creek Park Preserve, 1787 Holford Rd Garland
Information: Barbara Baynham at 214-542-1244 or baynham@nortel.com or <http://springcreekforest.org>

Nature Walk at Spring Creek PARK Preserve Weds, September 26, 2007 at 6:00 PM

Plant and wildflower guru Jim Varnum takes you on a walk through the prairie to point out fall wildflowers and help you identify them on your own. We'll also talk about anything we see -- plants, birds, butterflies, etc.. For adults, youth and kids. Bring binoculars, cameras, etc. SCPP is located at 1787 Holford Rd in Garland. It is on the right side as you drive from Pres. George Bush Turnpike toward Arapaho Rd. **For more information,** contact Jim Varnum jevnum@aol.com or 214-543-2055

Minutes for June 2007

Minutes for the June meeting of the Garland Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas held June 24, 2007 at the little red barn behind Rohde's Nursery and Nature Store. President Donna Simon called the meeting to at 2:15 p.m.

Donna reminded the members of the following:

- No meeting in July.
- July 21st - 9:00 a.m. Native Plant walk at Texas Discovery Gardens. We will need volunteers (arrive by 8:30) to hand out information.

October 18-21 NPSOT-NPAT 2007 Joint Symposium in Georgetown. Several have already signed up; don't be left out - we are going to have fun; see NPSOT website for details: (<http://www.npsot.org/symposium2007/home/index.shtml>)

Donna also reminded everyone of upcoming meetings and topics in Aug, Sept. and Oct. and the member's holiday party in November. Donna thanked the members who are working on the demonstration garden at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and the members who represented the chapter at the Texas Discovery Gardens plant sale earlier this month.

Donna then introduced our speaker, Peter Schaar, who spoke to us on "Woody Lilies". Peter showed a series of slides that demonstrated designs and effects of using plant members of the Agavaceae and Nolinaceae families. He recommended web sites of Peckerwoodgardens.org and Yuccado.com. He told us that he uses a lot of containers for his plants and recommended a very well drained potting mix (3/4 drainage rock and 1/4 compost). His garden will be included on the Garden Conservancy Tour again this year (October 20th).

The meeting closed with a drawing for a significant number of door prize plants donated by the following -- our friends at Texas Discovery Gardens, Donna Oliver, Glenda McCune, Butch Simon and others who may not have been recorded.

Glenda McCune, Secretary



**Almost every person, from childhood, has
been touched by the untamed beauty of
wildflowers.**

Lady Bird Johnson

Join the Native Plant Society of Texas

Membership is renewable annually and extends for a year from the date we receive your original payment. If you wish to join or renew your membership, mail this form and the appropriate remittance, to:

**Native Plant Society of Texas
P.O. Box 3017
Fredericksburg, TX 78624
830/997-9272**

- () Student.....\$15.00 () Senior citizen (65+)... \$20.00
 () Senior Couple (one member 65+)\$30.00
 () Individual \$25.00 () Family.....\$40.00
 () Group..... \$50.00 () Patron..... \$100.00
 () Benefactor.....\$250.00 () Supporting.....\$500.00
 () Corporate.....\$1000.00 () Lifetime..... \$1000.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

County _____ Phone _____

Chapter Affiliation GARLAND

New () Renewal () Address Change ()

E-mail Address _____

* You may also submit your application to the Chapter Treasurer at any meeting.



Passiflora incarnata , August 2007



Rohde's

Nursery
& Nature Store

Thanks to our host Greg and the staff at Rohde's. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Rohde's
1651 Wall Street
Garland, TX 75041
(972) 864-1934

<http://www.beorganic.com/index.htm>



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