

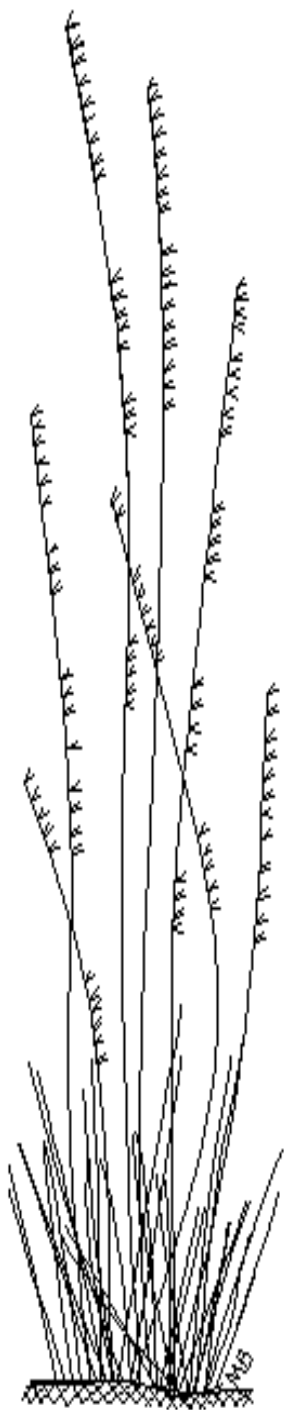
# The Grama Gazette

Newsletter of the Native Plant Society of Texas  
Garland Chapter

[www.npsot.org/garland](http://www.npsot.org/garland)

Volume XI Issue II

February 2009



## 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

## *Side Oats Notes*

Hello Chapter members and friends,

I hope everyone fared well during the storms last night. Our current weather patterns seem more like spring than winter, but the look of my backyard still says February. I have noticed a few more birds singing and rustling about though, reminding me that spring is near.

I have two plants that are harbingers of things to come. One is a yellow jasmine. This plant is chock full of buds that are ready to bloom on my fence line. The second plant is a bit more subtle- Agarita. The green holly-like leaves with their sharp points are the attention-getters, but the Agarita will soon put out small yellow flowers for our pleasure as well.

We have a wonderful guest speaker this month, Dale Clark of Butterflies Unlimited.

Butterflies and native plants add color and variety to our landscapes. Dale will integrate both in his presentation to our group.

I hope to see everyone this Sunday.

Have a great week,

Derrell

Remember, this month's meeting is this Sunday at 2 PM. See you all there!

## Plant of the month

Chiltepin, Chile Petin, Chile Piquin (Pequin),  
Bird Pepper

### **Texas Symbols, Native Pepper: Chiltepin**

Chiltepin

(*Capsicum annuum var. aviculare*)

Adopted on June 18, 1995.

Symbols that represent the Southwest in homes across the United States and beyond are hot. New Mexico adopted the chili (or chile) and frijoles (pinto beans) as its state vegetables because they are often eaten together. Not to be outdone, Texans named the jalapeño their official state pepper in 1995. In 1997, they crowned the chiltepin their official "native pepper."

Family: Solanaceae

Genus: *Capsicum* (KAP-sih-kum)

Species: *annuum var. aviculare*

**Chile Trivia:  
Birds love them,  
hence their nickname  
'bird pepper'.**



Chiltepin pepper plant © Michael (trekr) on [Flickr](#)  
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Please join us for our February meeting of  
the NPSOT, Garland Chapter,  
Featuring:

Dale Clark of Butterflies Unlimited,  
Presenting

Common Butterflies of Dallas and the  
Native Plants that support them.

February 15, 2009  
Meeting/Question & Answer Time at 2 pm  
Program begins at 2:30 pm  
Rohde's Nature Store and Nursery  
1651 Wall Street  
Garland  
972-864-4445

Please bring a friend!

Biography for Dale Clark

Fascinated by butterflies and moths ever since he was a child, Dale Clark turned a lifelong passion into a livelihood. In 1995 he quit his full-time "real job" and created Butterflies Unlimited, a butterfly farm south of Dallas, TX where he began raising Texas native butterflies to sell to live butterfly exhibits at zoos all across the country. That same year he also co-founded the Dallas County Lepidopterists' Society ([www.dallasbutterflies.com](http://www.dallasbutterflies.com)), a local organization which allows people in the Dallas/Fort Worth area to gather who share an interest in butterflies by going on monthly field trips. As if herding thousands of caterpillars on "the ranch" wasn't enough to keep him busy, in 2006 he became the editor of the News of the Lepidopterists' Society, the international newsletter of one of the oldest organizations in existence devoted to the study of butterflies and moths.

Program:

Common Butterflies of Dallas and the Native Plants that Support them.

This program gives a look at some of the more common

## Community Events

**Description:** 16th Annual Trout Lily Tour

**Start Date:** 2/28/2009 10:00:00 AM

**End Date:** 2/28/2009 2:00:00 PM

### 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Trout Lily Tour

**Comments:** The Preservation Society for Spring Creek Forest will host the annual Trout Lily Tour. Tours will begin at 10:00 A.M. and at 1:00 P.M. The tours are free to the public and begin in the parking lot at the Spring Creek Forest Preserve, 1770 Holford Road, Garland, Texas 75044 .

For more information log on to [Spring Creek Forest Preserve](#)



### **A Forgotten Conservation Method Gets New Life**

Rainwater harvesting is an innovative method to capture, divert and store rainwater for later use in the landscape. Harvesting rainwater for landscape irrigation can reduce water bills and reduce demand on the municipal water supply. (For more information about rainwater harvesting, visit <http://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu>)

In March, the City of Garland and the City of Mesquite will offer their first rainwater harvesting class, taught by Dr. Woodson. The first hour of class will provide information regarding outdoor water conservation, including the use of native and drought-tolerant plants. During the second hour, attendees will move outdoors to create their own rain barrel to take home. The cost for the class is \$10 per person, limit one barrel per person. Beginning February 1<sup>st</sup>, registration forms may be downloaded at [www.garlandwater.com](http://www.garlandwater.com). Online registration will be available at <http://play.garlandparks.com>. Click on "PLAY registration".

Schedule and location of rainwater harvesting classes:

March 14 10:30 a.m.  
Audubon Rec Center, 342 Oates Dr., Garland

April 25 9:00 a.m.  
City Lake Park, 403 S. Galloway, Mesquite

May 30 9:00 a.m.  
City Lake Park, 403 S. Galloway, Mesquite

June 27 10:30 a.m.  
Audubon Rec Center, 342 Oates Dr., Garland

# More Community Events

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## From Jim's "This & That"

### Great Backyard Bird Count - February 13-16

Sponsored by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society

Details: The Great Backyard Bird Count\* is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes. It's free, fun, and easy -- and it helps the birds. In 2008: total checklists submitted = 88,725, total species = 635, total individual birds counted = 9,805,216.

Here are five ways to participate locally:

1. On your own.

- (1) Select a site -- your backyard, a local park, your lakeside property, anywhere.
- (2) Visit the GBBC web site ( [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) ) for instructions, then count\* birds on any or all of the four dates.
- (3) Re-visit the web site and report your sightings. It's that simple.

2. Cedar Ridge Preserve - Feb 14.

MN Jim Varnum leads walks at 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM.

Or come any time and browse around on your own or with Jim. Contact Jim at [jevvarnum@aol.com](mailto:jevvarnum@aol.com)This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it or 214-543-2055. Web site; [www.audubondallas.org](http://www.audubondallas.org)

3. Bird's Fort Trails in Irving - Feb 14.

Dr. Marcy Brown Marsden (Univ. of Dallas) will lead guided walks at 9 and 11 AM

Or drop in and count anytime between 8AM and 1PM.

Location: Bird's Fort Trail, 5757 Riverside Drive, Irving. For more information or to RSVP please contact Dr. Marcy Brown Marsden at [mecbrown@udallas.edu](mailto:mecbrown@udallas.edu)This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it or 972-721-5245.

4. Trinity River Audubon Center - Feb 14.

Staff will be counting. Contact Dr. Jeanette Boylan at [jboylan@audubon.org](mailto:jboylan@audubon.org)This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it or 214-309-5811. Web site: <http://www.tx.audubon.org/Trinity.html>

5. Bob Jones Nature Center Southlake - Feb 14. Dr. Ray Chancellor will lead a walk at 8:30 AM to identify and count birds at BJNC. Web site: <http://www.bjnc.org/events.php>

\* Count means count and record the highest number of each species that you see at one time: for example, 1 Cooper's hawk, 2 cardinals, 5 goldfinches or 20 house sparrows.



Go to [North Central Texas Smartscape®](#) for tips and information on how to :

- Conserve water and save money on water bills
- Beautify your home and local environment
- Attract butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife
- Prevent and help reduce storm water pollution

The link is also on our chapter website. You will find a Water Conservation Guide, a photo gallery of water smart gardens, a calendar of events and classes, native plant lists, maintenance tips and much more.

## Even More Community Events

Texas Discovery Gardens:

214-428-7476 or visit the website at [www.texasdiscoverygardens.org](http://www.texasdiscoverygardens.org)

Guided Garden Walks

Third Saturday Garden Walks give you an in-depth look at garden ecology, maintenance strategies, and other interesting topics. Stroll through the Gardens with knowledgeable staff and local experts for about an hour and learn gardening tips and tricks.

**Cost:** Free with Paid Garden Admission: \$3/adults, \$1.50 for kids ages 3-11, and \$2 for seniors. Become a Garden member and enter for free!

### **Spring into Action with this Garden Walk When: Saturday, March 21**

**Time:** 10 am to 11 am The key to gardening success is to start--literally--from the ground up. Join us as we bring back this popular garden walk that shows you what to do for your soil type. Learn how to troubleshoot problems and amend garden beds.

**Fine Print:** Program appropriate for ages 8 and up.

### **Backyard Bird Garden Walk When: Saturday, May 9**

**Time:** 10 am to 11 am Discover the colorful native birds that grace your backyard and neighborhood parks. Bring your binoculars and a note pad and go on a bird watch with us as we find blue jays, house sparrows, mockingbirds and more.

**Fine Print:** Program appropriate for ages 8 and up.

From Jim's "This & That"

### **Two Rainwater Harvesting classes in February.**

A. February 18. Texas AgriLife Research Center, Renner Rd, Dallas. Learn about rainwater harvesting and join an applied learning activity by helping install a rainwater harvesting system. Presenters: Dr. Dotty Woodson, Extension Program Specialist - Water Resources and Dr. Fouad Jaber, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist - Water Resources. I have the flyer and registration info. Ask for it or check the online calendar.

B. February 21. Cedar Valley College. Efficient water use is increasingly important to Texas Residents. Rainwater harvesting is an innovative approach anyone can use to help save money on water bills and save a valuable resource. It is considered by many conservationists as a viable alternative source of water for both household and landscape usage. Topics discussed will include roofing materials options, rain barrel assembly, water conservation and health benefits of rain water. Presented by Pam Daniel, Ellis County Master Gardener.

Info? <http://www.cedarvalleycollege.edu/uploads/images/sched/sp09ce.pdf>

## Minutes of the January 2009 Meeting

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On January 18, 2009 the meeting of the Garland Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas met in the little red barn at the site of Rohde's Nursery and Nature Store. Our new president, Darrell Dixon, brought the meeting to order by asking if there was any business to be discussed.

May Foreman updated us with the newest information concerning our involvement in helping to host the 2010 NPSOT State Symposium, which will be held in Denton. Our chapter is co-chair with the Dallas one for the events committee and we will be in charge of deciding what and where the entertainment will be for either the Thursday or Friday night dinner; the state will provide the money.

Darrell then introduced our speaker, Jim Varnum, Master Naturalist and his topic: Blackland Prairie and Prairie Restoration. Jim broke his lecture into three parts: prairies, the Blackland Prairie, and restoration. In the discussion of prairies he took us through the seasonal changes, the description and characteristics of particular grasses and forbs, and the diversity of the Tallgrass Prairies. He then went on to differentiate the geology, hydrology, and climate of the two, out of a total of ten, eco-regions of Texas that comprise North-Central Texas: region 4, Blackland Prairie, and region 5, Crosstimbers.

Jim then went over the particulars of how to identify a prairie: it will be relatively flat with dominant grasses (little and big bluestem, Indian grass, switch grass) and wildflowers (purple coneflower, TX giant sage, purple prairie clover, gayfeather, goldenrod, prairie agalinis, great plains lady's tresses slipper, sunflower, ironweed) there may be a few trees, and it is not actively plowed or farmed with row crops. A true prairie remnant will never have been plowed and may have gilgais, topographical soil featuring ridges and valleys created by the movement of certain types of clay through the expansion and contraction process with water. We heard the reasons why people preserve prairies, how they manage them, and the differences between plant introductions and invasives.

Typical of his talks, Jim dropped many nuggets of information. For instance, armadillos cause triangular-shaped holes in the ground, the scientific name of the buffalo is *Bison bison* and the prairie at Spring Creek is a Little Bluestem Prairie. He stressed that vegetation always wants to revert to what it once was and prairies are no different; they must be managed with care and forethought.

Susan  
Secretary

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The best fertilizer is the  
gardener's shadow.  
~Author Unknown

## 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**

[http://www.npsot.org/application/join\\_npsot.html](http://www.npsot.org/application/join_npsot.html)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student.....\$15.00                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior citizen (65+)...\$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Couple (one member 65+) ..... | \$30.00   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual ..... \$25.00             | <input type="checkbox"/> Family.....\$40.00             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Group..... \$50.00                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron.....\$100.00            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor.....\$250.00              | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting.....\$500.00        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate.....\$1000.00              | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime..... \$1000.00        |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter Affiliation GARLAND \_\_\_\_\_

New  Renewal  Address Change

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**The Native Plant Society of Texas is a 501c3 not for-profit organization. All monetary gifts and contributions to the Garland Chapter of NPSOT are tax deductible. Remember our chapter in your tax planning contributions for 2008. Thank you!**



## 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) 864-4445

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



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