

THE GRAMA GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS, GARLAND CHAPTER
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June 2005

Side Oats Notes

It is always neat to catch up with fellow gardeners at our monthly meetings. I always run into new plants that people bring up for discussion. Either people bring plants for identification or they are brought as door prizes. Just this month Hank brought in about 6 cuttings of native plants. It is always interesting to see what is really blooming out in nature since I live in suburbia and import my native plants into my yard. He had an interesting blooming grass, a white small Queens Anne's lace and a poison ivy look alike. I didn't know the names of any of them but it was just so interesting to at least recognize the plants and see if anyone else knew the names.

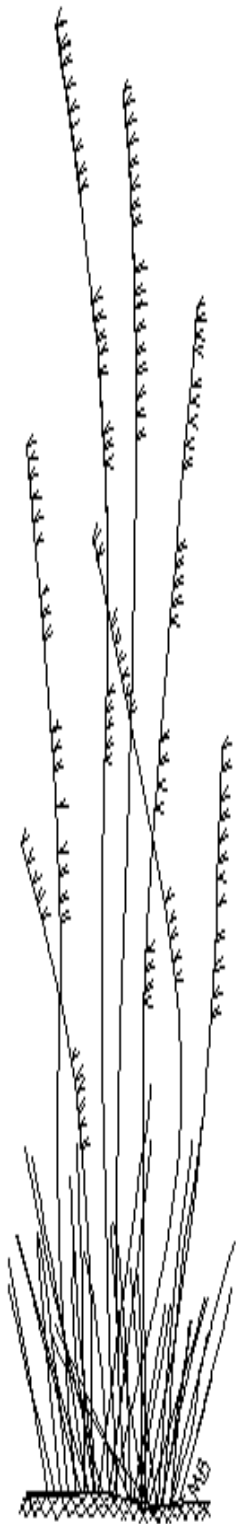
Also we always get some neat plants as door prizes for the raffle. I have seen some Mexican Buckeyes grown by Butch, some native plants dug up from Margaret Bays' yard in East Texas, Antonia's back yard prairie finds, and even some overly happy native plants that other gardeners were willing to share. If you have any "extra" plants that you would like to share with others, we always welcome donations to the raffle table. If you win, it is a great way to experiment with a new native plant for free. Now all you have to do is plant it and when it starts to take off, bring some to the next meeting to share with others.

This next meeting's topic is ***The Relationship of Dallas County Geology to Native Plants***. I know it sounds rather dry, but it won't be. I have heard Dan speak before and he is very engaging and high-energy. He teaches geology to teenagers, and, as you know, the attention span of a teen is rather short.

I know we tend to focus on Native Plants since we are the Native Plant Society of Texas. I have just realized how so many other things in both nature and in society affect plants. After taking the Master Naturalist certification several years ago I realized that "everything is inter-connected." If you take a butterfly away from the equation, then a plant cannot get fertilized. The plant dies. The mammal that depended on that specific plant for building its nest now can no longer reproduce. When one thing gets out of sync, everything else down the chain also starts to fall apart. The plants don't live in a vacuum. The demise of a plant is not necessarily due to direct human contact but it could be that the habitat for the butterfly a mile a way was destroyed, which then caused the plant to die.

The short story is the soil that we live upon, called the Blackland Prairie, was created over many years. Dan is going to explain why in some areas when you dig you find a lot of white rock mixed in between the black gumbo. It really helps one realize how very well adapted the native plants are to our specific soil. They have lived in the tough, sun-cracked black clay for many years and have deep tap roots to compensate for the soil peculiarities. I hope you can come to the meeting to learn more about the soil upon which we live and garden.

*Hope to see you Sunday,
Brigette Vinton
Garland Chapter President*



Sideoats Grama
(*Bouteloua
curtipendula*)

Sun, attractive seed form on one side of stems, state grass of Texas, attracts birds and butterflies, two to three feet tall.

Upcoming Events

❖ Backyard Pond Celebration at the Texas Discovery Gardens

- **What:** See a variety of weird wetland inhabitants, including native and exotic turtles, frogs, and toads. Learn how to build and maintain a natural water habitat in your backyard. Members of the North Texas Water Garden Society will offer advice and answer questions about fish, aquatic plants and pond designs. Visit a demonstration wildlife pond teeming with tadpoles, turtles, and dragonflies. Bring the whole family – this event is geared for all ages.
- **When:** 10 am – 2 pm, Saturday, June 18
- **Where:** Texas Discovery Gardens, 3601 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.; Dallas, TX 75210; phone – 214/428-7476
- **Cost:** \$3 for adults; \$2 for seniors (60+); \$1.50 for children 3-11. Free parking
- **For more info and a dynamite photo of a razorback turtle, go to www.texasdiscoverygardens.org**

❖ There is still time to register for the Native Prairie Association of Texas (NPAT) Biennial Conference

- **What:** A three day conference on “Native Grasslands and Water Resources – A Natural Partnership.”
- **When:** Friday, June 17th through Sunday, June 19th
- **Where:** Baylor University Science Building, Baylor University, Waco, TX
- **For more information and a registration form, go to www.texasprairie.org**

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee.
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson
(1830-1886)



June Meeting

*This Sunday, June 12th
at 2:30pm*

*Meet and greet 2:15pm
Come join your fellow members,
and bring a friend with you.*

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, clip and mail this application, along with the appropriate remittance, to:

Native Plant Society of Texas
P.O. Box 891
Georgetown, TX 78627
512.863.9685

() Student.....\$15.00 () Senior citizen...\$15.00
() Individual.....\$20.00 () Family.....\$25.00

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

County_____ Phone_____

Chapter Affiliation_____ **GARLAND**

New () Renewal () Address Change ()

E-mail Address_____

requested ideas for using the money. Brigette suggested purchasing more books for donation to local libraries or buying chairs for the meeting room. One member suggested establishing a club library. Nothing was decided.

President Vinton then introduced our speaker Sara Beckelman a certified master composter from the city of Irving. Some points of Sara's presentation: The benefits of composting are it loosens clay soil so the nutrients are available to your plants, taxpayers can save money by removing yard waste from landfills. In the summer 50% of landfill deposits are yard wastes.

Minutes of the Garland NPSOT General Meeting May 15, 2005

Chapter president Brigette Vinton called the meeting to order.

The following items were discussed:

-The June meeting will be held the second Sunday in June, the twelfth, to avoid interfering with Fathers Day.

-Our newsletter is being e-mailed, please verify that Carol Mills has your correct e-mail address.

-This year's chapter plant sale netted a record \$19,931.03. President Vinton

You can have a cold or hot compost pile. The advantage of a cold pile is it's less work. The disadvantages are it takes longer and doesn't kill weed seeds or chemicals. For a hot pile you must have at least 3 cubic feet of material for the pile to heat sufficiently. Start with equal parts of carbon, dead leaves, and nitrogen, freshly cut grass. Make 6" layers of each starting with the leaves. Wet the leaves till you can squeeze out a drop of water from handful, then add the grass and mix. Cottonseed meal or alfalfa meal will heat the pile and can be added weekly when you turn the pile. Turn to get the edges heated. Using a thermometer the pile should heat to 120

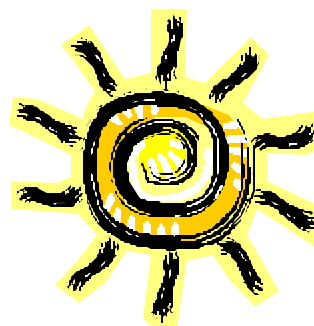
degrees overnight then increase to 140 degrees. Try to maintain 140 for three days as this will kill most weed seeds. Make your pile in a shady place and cover it. After four weeks you can use the results of a hot pile as mulch but it's not ready yet to be dug in as it will draw nitrogen from your plants.

Respectfully submitted,

Antonia Messina-Gates, secretary

For information, or to make comments, contact a member of the leadership team. VIP, please put NPSOT in e-mail subject line

Reminder
There is no meeting in July.
The next meeting is on August
21st.



Reminder: Membership Expiration

On the newsletter address label, the expiration date of your membership is listed. Please check to see if your membership has expired. The labels, provided to us from the state NPSOT, delete expired members after a few months. We want to continue having you as a member and sending you a newsletter. Please fill out the membership form attached. Thank You!



NPSOT member Glenda McCune was recently honored at the Texas Discovery Gardens volunteer appreciation dinner. She contributed the most hours, 216, of any volunteer. The person with the second most hours had only 150. Well done Glenda!

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**A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR HOST GREGORY
AND THE STAFF AT ROHDE'S NURSERY
YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

Visit Rohde's on the Internet at

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

**Visit Rohde's at 1651 Wall Street, Garland,
Texas 75041.**

From LBJ, go North on Garland Road for two blocks to Leon Road. Turn right and go one block to Wall Street. Turn left onto Wall and you can't miss them! You can also reach Rohde's by phone at (972) 864-1934 or (800) 864-4445. Mapsco 29P