



NATIVES ON THE GROW



Newsletter of the Kerrville Chapter of the
Native Plant Society of Texas

*Dedicated to the understanding, preservation, and enjoyment
of the native flora of the Texas Hill Country*

February 2012

Website: www.npsot.org/kerrville



February Meeting:

“Edible Native Plants”

Tuesday, February 14th, 2012

4:30 p.m. socializing / 5:00 meeting

Riverside Nature Center



This Valentine’s Day special will

feature noted culinary critic,
Wayne Este, sharing tips, techniques,
information and recipes using
Texas Native Plants.



Visitors Welcome!





Wildflower “Walk & Talk” at RNC



submitted by Martha Miesch

Attention all wildflower nerds — oops — enthusiasts! **Riverside Nature Center’s volunteers are offering a new opportunity for nature lovers to add fun to the task of learning about 150 native wildflower species of the more than 500 commonly found in the Hill Country. On the first and third Wednesday mornings from 9 to 10 am beginning in March, volunteers will meet to walk and talk our way through the gardens of the RNC. We will focus our attention on a few species at each session with shared learning derived from resources, individual observations, and hands-on opportunities. We will observe and document changes in these plants through the months from “cradle to grave”, or to be more precise, from rosettes to gleaned seeds.**

Our first session will be conducted on Wednesday, March 7th at 9 am, meeting on the back deck of the **Visitor’s Center, weather permitting. If you would like to participate, please send an e-mail to Barbara Lowenthal at beltex@ktc.com or Julie Clay at jbrazaitis@aol.com with your contact information. Bring a copy of Marshall Enquist’s book *Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country* and a magnifying glass if you have them, as well as paper and pencil for notes. Handouts will be provided to help you start a personal notebook. We will begin to observe and document a few species with guidance from experienced volunteers.**

On the second and fourth Wednesdays, volunteers may choose to further their learning through hands-on maintenance of the gardens — acquiring skills in planting, pruning, and thinning, when needed. Wildflowers can be invasive too. Project # KR-02-D is for these Wednesday morning volunteer activities if you are a HCMN member.

Hope you can join this fun group! 

New Members



Welcome!

We are so happy to have you!

- ◆ Donna Oliver -Leep (Junction)
- ◆ Betty Vernon (Hunt)

Recently Renewed Memberships (past 3 months)

Thank You! 

Clay	Julie T.
Eklund	Susan
Johnson	Cynthia
Kennedy	Sandi
Longacre	Dr. Susan
Miesch	Martha
Moss	Anne
Murphy	Mikell
Pepping	Carolyn
Platte	Edna & Howard
Quinby	John & Barbara
Stidham	Barbara
Williams	Lisa

There has NEVER been a better time to join the Native Plant Society of Texas.

- ◆ [Online membership signup/renewal.](#)
- ◆ Or print an [Application Form](#) and mail it in with your check.

Plains Coreopsis

Article submitted by Znobias Wootan,
Native American Seed, Junction, Texas

The relief of some long awaited, much appreciated, frequent fall rains, after a brutally dry summer, has brought some hope for some spring color in the Texas landscape. There are some staple wildflowers that you can almost always depend on seeing in the spring: Bluebonnets, Lemon Mint, Indian Blanket, Prairie and Clasp Coneflower, Mexican Hat and Plains Coreopsis. Plains Coreopsis, *Coreopsis tinctoria*, is not just another little yellow flower but a proven survivor. It has the unique capability of producing a seed crop faster than any farmer finds comfortable even after the application of so-called weed sprays. It is also a dependable warm season nurse crop for our native grass and perennial wildflower plantings in areas that are prone to erosion. Plains Coreopsis likes well drained sites that get adequate water, and blooms in abundance after a wet spring. Bottom lands are often covered in the red highlighted yellow flowers. The seeds can be sown in late fall or early spring and are used in ornamental gardens and in wildflower meadow seedings from Canada to Mexico and from the east coast to the west coast.



Sow Plains Coreopsis from seed in a sunny location directly on the surface and cover very lightly with soil. Pollinators will love the generous nectar source.



Each seedpod can have hundreds of tiny black seeds inside.



Interesting round blue-grey buds open up into a beautiful yellow flower with a splash of red.

Plains Coreopsis germinates best when exposed to light, so planting in a sunny location directly on the surface and covering the seed very lightly with soil is recommended. Although it is considered an annual, sometimes it will bloom for two or three years if the weather cooperates. It usually germinates in the fall and overwinters as a small rosette, which is a round low growing group of leaves. A large percentage of wildflowers have this same growth cycle. In early spring the stems begin elongating and branching, sometimes reaching a height of 4 ft. but usually around 2-3 ft. Anywhere this wildflower is planted it will draw pollinators of all types as it is a generous nectar source — and birds love the seeds. At the end of the branched stems are numerous flower heads that are 1-2 inches in diameter. Being an annual, the seeds must be allowed to mature and disperse in order for there to be more blooms the following season. The flower petals have a tint of red at the center, and they are used even today for producing red and yellow dyes. The flowers can also be boiled to produce a red beverage that has several medicinal uses.

A majority of your landscape should be made up of dependable performers such as Plains Coreopsis in combination with as much diversity as you can add. This approach will always bring results. Consider your dependable performers as your “meat and potatoes” then add “herbs and spices” for diversity. Neither one by itself is as good as the two combined. ♻️

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I'm "Singin' in the rain" . . .



by Cindy Anderson

I promised pictures a while back of my new rainwater barrels which were installed over the Thanksgiving weekend, just in time for some welcome rain. And today as I write, there is MORE RAIN!!! These new barrels filled with the first small rain, and since then have been providing all the water for one large flower bed, several patio pots, and my small vegetable garden — reducing the amount of city water that must be pulled from the Guadalupe River.



This is a project easily done by anyone (If I can do it, YOU can do it.) **I don't even have a pickup truck! I bought the rain barrels (on sale) from Gibson's — and the cinder blocks and miscellaneous parts from Home Depot and Lowe's.** The hardest (and scariest) part was cutting the existing downspout with a hacksaw — and so I let my husband do that in the interest of self-preservation. :) And yes, my strong and handsome son carried the cinder blocks from the car to the flower bed for me — but I COULD have done it (two at a time) with my trusty wheelbarrow.

The barrels came with "overflow" holes with fittings on the upper right side of each, (see below right) so I joined the 3 barrels together with two flexible pipes so that as the first tank filled it would automatically fill the next barrel, etc. To the far right barrel (the one to fill last) I attached a standard garden hose to its overflow valve, to carry excess water to a nearby tree.

The bottom front of each barrel was pre-drilled for screwing in spigots or threaded valves with shutoffs. I have attached a soaker hose to the middle barrel (the valve has an open/close shutoff), and I fill buckets from spigots in the other two.

Some of you in rural areas have much larger tanks, professionally installed and possibly supplying ALL the water you need — but for those of us in residential areas where that would be difficult or impossible, look for a good spot where you can add a few rain barrels like these. Every drop counts!

The Hill Country Master Gardeners also build and sell inexpensive rain barrels to the community. You can see them on their website www.hillcountrymastergardeners.org and even order them online.

Also — THANK YOU to the Upper Guadalupe River Authority for the nice \$50 rebate! Every penny counts too! ♪



Invaders of Texas Training Opportunity

Submitted by Phyllis Muska

Invasive plants are destroying precious ecosystems throughout the world. You can help protect and restore our ecosystem from the impacts of invasive plants by joining the Hill Country Invaders in our documentation and eradication efforts.

On Saturday, February 25, the Balcones and Hill Country Satellites of the Texas Invaders Program, along with Cibolo Nature Center, are sponsoring an Invasive Plants Advanced Training opportunity. The training will be held from 8:30am to 4:30pm at Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne. Training will include classroom instruction on identification of invasive plants and trees. The field experience segment will include plant identification, reporting, and recording findings in the texasinvasives.org database. At the completion of the one-day session participants will be certified as Texas Invaders Citizen Scientists.

A fee of \$20 covers class materials and lunch. Advanced registration is required. To register, go [here](#). Contact Phyllis Muska at pmuska@windstream.net for additional information.



If Winter comes,
can Spring be
far behind?

Percy Bysshe Shelley

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N.I.C.E.: Melinda Wasson & Gwynn Jackson

Earth Day Plant Sale: [CAN YOU HELP?](#)

Social: Patsy Newbolt

Webmaster: Raúl Peña




January meeting with Harvey Hilderbran

State Representative Harvey Hilderbran packed the house on January 10th with NPSOT members and visitors concerned with legislation governing water issues in our drought-stricken state.

Mr. Hilderbran recognized and complimented our Native Plant Society chapter for the educational role we play in water conservation and land management practices, for promoting good stewardship of our Hill Country resources, guarding our precious rivers and riparian areas, and promoting the use of native plants.

Also in attendance at our meeting were Kerr County Commissioners Guy Overby and Buster Baldwin, and our own Diane McMahon, NPSOT officer and the Precinct 3 Director for the Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District. We thank Mr. Hilderbran as well as all the concerned citizens of Kerrville who attended our meeting.

Thanks also to Barbara & David Lingle for the YUMMY refreshments! 

Native Plant Society of Texas

The Native Plant Society of Texas wants to preserve our state's rich heritage for future generations. NPSOT is a non-profit organization run by volunteers. We work to promote native plant appreciation, research, and conservation through 32 chapters located around the state. Please support NPSOT by becoming a member or making a donation. Membership forms are available at chapter meetings and the NPSOT website www.npsot.org. For IRS income tax purposes, the full amount of your NPSOT membership dues is tax-deductible as a charitable contribution.

Membership categories and annual dues:

Student:	\$ 15
Individual :	\$ 25
Couple/Family :	\$ 40
Student:	\$ 15
Senior Individual (65+) :	\$ 20
Senior Couple (one 65+) :	\$ 30
Group :	\$ 50
Patron :	\$ 100
Benefactor :	\$ 250
Supporting :	\$ 500
Corporate Sponsor :	\$1000

NOTE: NPSOT dues are sent to the state organization located in Fredericksburg (which is not the same as the Fredericksburg NPSOT Chapter.) The state organization returns 15% of the dues back to the local chapters.

STATE OFFICE
 NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS
 P.O. Box 3017 Fredericksburg, TX 78624
 320 W. San Antonio St. 830-997-9272
 (Office Manager is Pam Middleton.)
www.npsot.org

Note to Members:

Renewal letters are mailed to all members at the beginning of the month your membership expires.

NAMETAGS are kept at RNC and brought out for each NPSOT meeting. They help us get to know each other! If you are a new member, we are already making one for you and we will have it at the next meeting at RNC. If yours is missing, please contact our Director of Membership, Nina Wagner, at wagnina@windstream.net or phone her at 896-0391 before our next meeting.

MINUTES OF OUR MEETINGS are kept in a notebook for viewing at our welcome table at meetings held at Riverside Nature Center, and are also posted monthly to our Web site, on the "Officers" page.

Our Goals:

- ◆ To educate both our members and the general public, and to foster a greater awareness and understanding of our native flora;
- ◆ To preserve rare and endangered species and their habitats;
- ◆ To encourage landscaping with appropriate native plants, for their beauty, ease of maintenance, and water-conserving qualities;
- ◆ To protect, conserve and restore native plants threatened by development;
- ◆ To encourage the responsible propagation of native plants;
- ◆ To promote an appreciation and understanding of current, historical and potential uses of native plants.



Native Plant Society of Texas

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.

The following businesses contribute annually to our Chapter.
Please support *them* as well!

Alltex Nursery/Landscapes



Landscape Design & Installation
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The Plant Haus 2

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Kerrville, TX 78028
Phone: 830-792-4444 or 1-800-887-3014
Karen King Smith
Texas Certified Master Nurseryman
Email: kksmith6@ktc.com

Natives of Texas

Hill Country Native Plants
4256 Medina Hwy
Kerrville, TX 78028
830-896-2169
Website: <http://www.nativesoftexas.com/>
Email: dwinningham@mac.com

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www.seedsource.com



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Contact Trish Stone
trishnbill@hctc.net
238-3132

