



# THE TEXAS SAGE

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 3

April 2005

## Year 2005 Officers and Committee Chairs

### President

Pat Lovejoy  
817-447-7924  
patlovejoy@att.net

### Vice President & Program Chair

Ann Alderfer  
817-457-0972  
easa@swbell.net

### Treasurer

Devanie Fergus  
817-861-1932  
devanieferg@sbcglobal.net

### Secretary

Hester Schwarzer  
817-265-0777  
hwschwarzer@aol.com

### Historian

Evaline Woodrey  
817-295-4683  
ewoodrey@earthlink.net

### Hospitality Chair

Donna Morris  
817-263-5141  
morris\_donna@hotmail.com

### Membership Chair

Helena vanHeiningen  
817-244-5338  
hvanhein@sbcglobal.net

### Webmaster

Vicky Neal  
817-361-0455  
victoriavery@att.net

### Outreach

Open

### Education

Taylor Stephens-Parker  
817-784-6003  
soilnurse@earthlink.net

### Publicity

817-457-4703  
Gailon Hardin  
ghardin@flash.net

### Field Reporter

John Dycus  
j.dycus@concast.net



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## The President's Corner

### Members and Friends:

It was great to see so many of you at our March meeting. We are growing and it's exciting to welcome so many new members. We share a common interest in native plants and hopefully we can "spread the word on natives" to our family and friends. Our raffle was a big success again! I would like to thank all who brought a raffle item and/or bought a ticket.

My yard, and probably yours, is bursting with new growth, drinking up all the moisture from the rains and soaking up the wonderful spring sunshine. My tiny patch of golden groundsel, as well as the blackfoot daisy, columbine, four-nerve daisy and *Salvia greggii* are beginning to bloom. The Mexican plums are bursting with color. It can't help but make you excited about the arrival of spring.

The nurseries are stocking up on plants and several of us purchased some wonderful natives on our way to Austin in February for the NPSOT/Wildflower Center Spring Symposium. While in Austin, 12 of us learned all about grasses, ferns, sedges, cacti and their allies, plus organic gardening practices. We learned that sedges have edges, grasses have joints, and rushes are round. Also that of the 135 species of ferns in Texas, very few do well here and landscaping with cactus can be very challenging in our regional climate. Our very own John Snowden showed us how landscaping with native grasses provides much more diversity and interest than a simple Bermuda grass lawn. It was another great opportunity to learn more about native plants. I encourage each of you to attend next February. Not only do we learn a lot about native plants, the Wildflower Center is a great place to visit even in the rain.

We had another great opportunity to learn about the ecological restoration process at the Fort Worth Nature Center from Suzanne Tuttle at our March meeting. It's amazing to see the transformation process. We admire Suzanne and all the good work they are doing at the Nature Center. I encourage all of you to visit and volunteer there also.

Still another educational opportunity will be our upcoming "Smart Start Your Yard with Natives" series with Rosa Finsley. We have reserved two rooms at the Botanic Gardens so will have plenty of room for everyone. I hope to see all of you there!

Our mission is *"To promote the conservation, research and utilization of the native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example"*. Educating ourselves is the first step. Happy spring,

Pat



April meeting: Thursday, April 14, 7:00 pm, Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Orchid Room

The North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas is pleased to welcome Rosa Finsley, well known Texas Native Landscape Architect, for a three-part workshop on the use of native plants in your landscape. Rosa will present workshops at our April 14 and May 12 meetings, with a June 9 Walking Workshop through the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park, Arlington.

**Fee: \$45 (Free to NPSOT-NCC members)** Information: Taylor Stephens-Parker 817-784-6003 or [soilnurse@sbcglobal.net](mailto:soilnurse@sbcglobal.net).

## Hulen Library *Evaline Woodrey*

It was a perfect day to work and good to be back in the garden in February after four months. Rain and the Thanksgiving holiday kept us at bay. There were five Master Gardeners besides myself; Peggy Clement, Joyce Miller, Nancy Dozier, Carol Norfleet, and Peggy Falconer.

Actually, I must admit I skipped the workday in January because my contact in Fort Worth said it was raining and icy cold. But believe it or not, three hardy souls showed up for an hour and trimmed the fall aster. They were Peggy Falconer, Barbara Durnan, and Devanie Fergus.

The henbit had outpaced us even though I had spent three hours weeding earlier. The lantana still hadn't been pruned and there was much more to be cut back: pavonia, Maximilian sunflower, verbena and the ongoing struggle with wax myrtle root sprouts. We are looking forward to the spring show of winecup this year. We replanted it in the fall to restore the original look to the inner circle. It disappeared at some point and I am wondering if our resident critters enjoyed the fleshy roots. We will keep an eye on it this time.

We have allowed several plants to invade the gravelly path. They will demonstrate not only the determination of these plants to propagate but also to survive in the harshest of environments.

## Outside & In



*Left*, a hardy crew continued the removal of woody vegetation from Arlington's only unplowed blackland prairie during the January workday. *Right*, Jan Miller discusses NPSOT matters with Erin Owen at the Arlington Home & Garden show in January.



## Garden Cuttings *Gailon Hardin*

Spring is around the corner; now if the corner would just stand still. Our indigenous plants know what to do with this kind of weather. However, our adaptive plants want to begin new growth as soon as we hit our first 70-degree day. Did you know we had ten 70-degree days in January 2005? That really fools the non-native plants. Did you spread a few inches of mulch last month as the newsletter suggested? If so, you insulated the ground and kept soil temperatures cool, thus allowing our non-natives to sleep a little longer. This year's mulch is next year's compost, the only fertilizer our natives need, but that lawn is hungry as well as thirsty. Now is a good time to give that lawn a dose of good organic fertilizer—organic meaning animal or vegetable based, not synthetic NPK and salt based. Better yet, get rid of that hungry, thirsty lawn and plant more natives.

Now is the time to start selectively weeding before the annuals set seed and the perennials set long roots. Although the task may seem overwhelming, a little work over many times will eventually accomplish the end. Again, mulch applied at a depth of two to three inches can smother annual weeds.

Do not prune red oaks or live oaks until the heat of July or August in order to avoid oak wilt. The beetle that carries the oak wilt disease will emerge from its winter dormancy if it has not done so. Fresh wounds on a tree allow easy access to the boring beetle and therefore to the potential disease. When hot weather arrives, the beetle's activity slows down to the point where it is safe to prune again.

Happy gardening with natives.

## NATIVE PLANT SALE

April 30, 2005 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park in Arlington  
Local Organically Grown Texas Native Plants

Location: North of I-20 at Arkansas Lane & Spanish Trail. Take Green Oaks Blvd north; go east on Arkansas Lane; turn south on Spanish Trail, second parking lot entrance.

For more information call Pat Lovejoy, 817-447-7924 or Taylor Stephens-Parker, 817-784-6003

Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park *Molly Hollar and John Dycus*



Let's hear it for spring. The winecups are peeping out and spilling over the stone border in the butterfly garden at the Molly Hollar Wildscape, soon to be joined by masses of pink evening primrose. Blooming golden groundsel, lavender lyreleaf sage and purple violets will intensify the show. Butterflies are fluttering and song-birds are singing, adding movement and sound to complete the joy of strolling the wildscape at the beginning of springtime.

Arlington Parks and Recreation crews are transforming the area as they keep zapping the invasive privet. More than 100 understory trees have been planted to

restore the woodland beauty. Future springs will bring more color from redbuds, Mexican plums, roughleaf dogwoods, rusty blackhaw viburnums, Carolina buckthorns and Mexican buckeyes.

Master Naturalist Shirley Craig, a splendid wildscape volunteer, donated dozens of these small trees, while others were rescued by numerous Veterans Park loyalists. And composting volunteers have provided bins of "black gold" to get these young trees ready to grow. This wonderful compost changes surviving plants into thriving ones and is greatly appreciated.

Abundant rains left the trails muddy, but loads of wood-chip mulch wheelbarrowed and distributed by Mike Warren and his crews have almost finished correcting the problem. The greenhouse is running over with plants grown by propagation volunteers to be put out in the wildscape and sold at the plant sale April 30 (more info on page 2). In addition, several thousand seedballs have been tossed to grow little bluestem and other grasses and forbs in the wildscape prairie and the New York Avenue prairie.

Anne and Randy Alderfer spent a recent morning digging out the kiosk in the compost area. Martin Sanchez of the Arlington Parks Department provided an eight-man team to move the kiosk into the new holes the Alderfers excavated beside the double kiosk to make it, if you're counting, a triple kiosk. Ellen Baskerville and her sign committee are working on improved displays.

Spring is a time of accelerated activity in the wildscape with much to be done. The urge to flee the living room and enjoy the outdoors can be compelling. Beginning this month, wildscape workdays will be Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to noon and/or 1-3 p.m., and the first and third Saturdays from 9 a.m. to noon, to give the volunteers more choices. Call Molly Hollar at (817) 319-6924 for details.

Special Raffle Thanks to:

Designs in Nature for the Possumhaw Holly  
 Weston Gardens in Bloom for gift certificates  
 Green Mamas for gift certificates  
 We appreciate your continued support.

*It must be spring:  
 Redbuds wouldn't lie  
 about something  
 so important.*



And More Thanks for March raffle items:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Ann Alderfer - Sun hats                     | Jeannie Erickson - Texas Wildflower book             |
| Dagmar Higgins - chives, purple coneflower, | Joyce Miller - copper hummingbird                    |
| Canada wildrye, spiderwort, lyreleaf sage   | Letty Stearns - gloves                               |
| Elaine Couch - gloves, bulb planter         | Molly Hollar - Carolina buckthorns                   |
| Gailon Hardin - Mexican plum                | Pat Lovejoy - four nerve daisy, columbine, obelisque |

**Don't forget the Fall NPSOT Symposium in Big Bend, October 20-23, 2005**

The Big Bend NPSOT chapter has many wonderful activities planned. Make your hotel reservations soon as rooms are going fast! Check the NPSOT website or the next state newsletter for more details.

## Next Meeting

**Thursday, April 14**

7:00 pm

Fort Worth Botanic Gardens

Rosa Finsley

Native Landscape Architect

**Special Workshop:  
Smart Start Your Yard  
with Natives**

Visit us on the Web at  
[www.txnativeplants.org](http://www.txnativeplants.org)

### Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

We invite you to become a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas. Membership is open to any individual, family, or organization. Membership is renewable annually and extends for a year from the date we receive your original payment.

If you wish to join, please indicate your category of membership, then clip and mail this application along with the appropriate remittance to:

Native Plant Society of Texas  
P.O. Box 891, Georgetown, TX 78627  
512-868-8799 or 512-931-1166

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Group	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizen	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Sponsor	\$1000

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Chapter Affiliation: North Central Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE TEXAS SAGE

is a monthly publication of the North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas.

For changes of address or information about contributing to the newsletter, please contact the newsletter editor.

The deadline for submitting articles for inclusion in next month's newsletter is the 15th of every month.

John Darling, Editor  
*The Texas Sage*  
817-274-1077  
[1darling@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1darling@sbcglobal.net)

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