



# N P S O T

**North Central Texas  
News**

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Newsletter  
Volume 19, Number 5 September 2007

## The President's Corner John Bridges

Greetings North Central Chapter,

What a strange season. Did you miss all those days of great Texas weather? You remember that week and a half minus two rain days between the 100-year floods and the 104-degree weather. Did you blink and miss them?

While the rains helped us recover from the last few years of drought, they came with a cost. My post oaks that survived that nasty multiyear drought were suddenly asked to hold their breath under water-logged soil for over 10 weeks. Post oaks don't hold their breath well at all. It isn't a matter of *if* all that rain hurt my post oaks, it's more a matter of *how much* it hurt them. Over the next 5 to 7 years, post oak deaths will be blamed on several secondary issues. The real cause will be this last drought followed by 10 weeks of suffocation from waterlogged soil.

Did you have any fungus problems this year, or do you live in an apartment? I think all of us must have had some recent fungus problems. Growing native plants is supposed to get us out of most of these problems, but 10 weeks of rain caught me totally off guard. How do you treat powdery mildew while it's raining? Have any of you used one of these new biofungicides like *Bacillus subtilis*? It's found in Serenade Garden, among others. *Bacillus subtilis* is a bacterium listed by OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) for certified organic food production.

I have an evil confession: I thought it was funny when the webworms stripped all the fruitless mulberries. But after the

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### Year 2007 Officers

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Molly Holler Wildscape

**June meeting: Thursday, June 7, 7:00 pm,  
Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Deborah Beggs Moncrief  
Garden Center, Orchid Room**

**Gaion Hardin, Texas Master Gardener Propagation  
Specialist and Master Naturalist, will present "Propagation  
of Native Plants". Note: Harvest of native plants will fol-  
low the propagation program in the fall at the homes of  
several NPSOT members.**

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webworms stripped all the fruitless mulberries, they just kept coming. I noticed a week ago that they were starting to go after my redbuds. This week they also put possumhaw on their buffet. I have webworms that are even eating my greenbriar. I've never seen anything eat briar. I'm about to Btk about 300,000 of those little buggers.

What is Btk and why did I choose it instead of something from one of those big box stores? Btk stands for *Bacillus thuringiensis*, subspecies *kurstaki*. It only kills the larva of moths and butterflies, nothing else. No, I'm not going to kill butterflies. I'm only going to spray limbs where I can see active webworms. It does no good to spray already stripped limbs for those webworms have already moved on. When I spray Btk in the evening, it is almost completely gone by noon the next day. I wish all pesticides went away as fast as Btk.

Before you spray Btk make sure that you aren't spraying any butterfly larva plants. Before making a

decision to kill anything, first identify what it is. Our list of where to buy native plants also works for where to get advice on bugs and butterfly larval plants.

Most years I just have a few outbreaks of webworms. For those I just tear up the web in the morning and by evening, wasps have carried off all the webworms to feed to their young. This year there are just too many.

Here's hoping that we get a decade of normal weather starting soon. Our trees deserve a break.

By the way, we also have our fall garden show at the Fort Worth Convention Center on September 14 through 16, and it's coming up real fast. Can you lend a hand?

Do try to make our September 6 meeting. Gailon Hardin will be teaching us how to propagate native plants just in time to grow them for our spring plant sale.

See you on the 6<sup>th</sup>,

John Bridges

## Show Us Your Yard John Darling

This month it's not really a yard, but a raggedy strip on a vacant lot next to my house in Arlington. It developed in bits and pieces without a plan, starting with a few transplanted cherry laurels. Kindly native plant enthusiasts have donated sea oats, turk's cap and several other hardy species.

The lot hasn't been watered since last fall, so it's become another testimonial to the virtues of native plant landscaping.

Probably the high point is a small Hercules club that recently hosted four giant swallowtail larvae.



## This Month's Plant

(Text from Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Native Plants Database)

### Flame acanthus

*Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii*  
Acanthaceae (Acanthus Family)

Flame acanthus is a spreading, 3 ft. deciduous shrub with exfoliating bark; red-orange, tubular flowers; and light-green, lanceolate leaves. This drought- and cold-tolerant shrub will adapt to a variety of soils and does well in patio pots. It blooms better in full sun but will tolerate light shade. Cutting the plant back severely in winter will provide more blooms and encourage a bushier form. Attractive bark provides winter interest.



**Native Distribution:** Edwards Plateau, Texas, to northern Mexico.

**Native Habitat:** Rocky banks and floodplains of streams on the Edwards Plateau; also North Mexico.  
**Growing Conditions**

**Soil:** Well-drained sand, loam, clay, caliche, limestone.

#### **Benefit**

**Ornamental:** Perennial garden, Blooms ornamental, Showy, Planned landscape, Understory

**Wildlife:** Long-lasting flowers attract hummingbirds and butterflies.

**Attracts:** Hummingbirds, Butterflies

**Larval host:** Janais Patch, Texan Crescentspot

## Bees & Flowers



### Organic Gardening Club of Fort Worth

September 25, 7:00 PM.

Ft Worth Botanical Gardens

3220 Botanic Garden

Deborah Beggs Moncrief Garden Center, Redbud Hall

**Program:** 15 minute video by Dr. Richard Gude "God's Miracle of the Flower, the Insect and the Seed."

Followed by a program on Bee Gardening.

**Speakers:** Pete Glasser and Bob Ressel, beekeepers.

Susan Jennings-Horn, President and Contact  
Phone 817.274.8460

# The Molly Hollar Wildscape

It's been hot and dry for a while now, but volunteers have been busy in July and August, mostly catching up with our amazing crop of weeds. Despite the heat, we had a good turnout for the August compost class (middle right). On August 4, we had a mulch emergency and Greg, our remarkable Parks and Rec guy, dropped what he was doing and bailed us out (lower right).



## Next Meeting

Thursday, September 7  
7:00 pm  
Fort Worth  
Botanic Gardens

Gailon Hardin:

Propagation of  
Native Plants

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

### Join the Native Plant Society of Texas!

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 with the appropriate remittance to:

Native Plant Society of Texas  
PO Box 3017, Fredricksburg, TX 78624  
830-997-9272

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$15	<input type="checkbox"/> Couple/Family	\$40
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Individual (65+)	\$20	<input type="checkbox"/> Group	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Senior Couple (one 65+)	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$250
		<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$500
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Chapter Affiliation: North Central Chapter

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## The North Central Texas NPSOT News

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.

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