

**Perennial: Spiderwort (*Tradescantia* species)**

**Description:** Spiderwort, *Tradescantia* species, is a genus of over 60 New World species that range from southern Canada to northern Argentina. In North Texas, both (*T. occidentalis*) and (*T. ohioensis*) Spiderwort species are found. Spiderwort grows individually at first and establishes clumps. It grows one to two feet tall with long, blade-like leaves. Spiderwort may go dormant in the winter and over our long dry summers.



Photos by Kathy Saucier (left) and Lon Turnbull (right)

**Flowers:** Spiderwort blooms prolifically in the spring and sometimes in the fall with flowers that range from white, pink or purple to bright blue. Flowers have three petals and six yellow anthers. Spiderwort blooms early in the morning. During the afternoon, the flowers usually close up in the heat, but on cool and cloudy days, they may remain open all day. Each flower lasts for only one day, but each spiderwort has many flowers, assuring a long display in the garden bed.

**Planting sites:** Spiderwort can be planted in full sun to partial or dappled shade. It grows well in most types of soil, from acid to alkaline, from dry to damp. If not given supplemental water, Spiderwort will go dormant during North Texas summers. When flowering is finished, Spiderwort may be cut to the ground. When the fall rains begin, Spiderwort will sprout new foliage and may re-bloom.

**Watering Instructions:** Spiderwort should be watered well immediately after planting and then every other week during the first growing season if there is no rain. After the first growing season, Spiderwort should survive with existing rainfall because it is drought tolerant.

**Comments:** Although spiderwort goes dormant in the summer, the foliage sprouts out in fall and stays green through our mild winters when almost everything else is dormant. Native Spiderwort is a welcome addition to garden beds. There are many named cultivars available at your local nursery.

Look for the NICE! Plant of the Season signs and information sheets on your next visit to a participating North Texas nursery. Thank you for using native plants in your landscapes.

Trinity Forks Chapter, Native Plant Society of Texas Meetings are the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Sep & Oct, TWU's ACT building 6:30 pm, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.