



From the Prez...

I hope everyone had a great summer and is ready for fall. Summer vacations are over, school has started and our Trinity Forks Chapter meeting is just around the corner. As you know, our 2004 president, **Garret Brown** accepted a position with IsoRay and moved to Washington state. We will certainly miss Garrett. He has been a valuable member of Trinity Forks, working tirelessly to support our chapter and promote native plants. Garrett wrote articles for the newsletter, sponsored native plant rescues and work done for school gardens in addition to serving as ways and means chairman to head up plant sales, membership chairman and president. Garrett was always generous to share his native plants with members and provide stock for our sales. The twining **cypress vines** (*Ipomoea quamoclit*) with their feathery leaves and dark red flowers, blooming in my yard now, are from Garrett. We owe him a big thank you for sharing his plants, time and talents.

For the remainder of the year, I will be the acting president. Thanks to **Dorothy Thetford**, we shall have a vice president. **John Vandigriff** is working with **Cynthia Maguire** to become our new newsletter editor. They both deserve our appreciation and support. Special thanks go to **Cathy Lustgarten** for stepping into the position of ways and means chair. The position was vacant since **Susan Burke** accepted a position with Oklahoma State University and moved to Stillwater. Susan was a new member who did a super job with our spring plant sale at the Redbud Days Festival. I would also like to thank the other board members who will remain the same until we elect new officers for 2005 in October. We always need members to serve on the board and committees. Please take this opportunity to become more involved and help our chapter by volunteering to serve.

We will be having another fall plant sale on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Our plant sales serve several purposes. They provide funds for our chapter to operate and allow us to support activities that promote native plants. The plant sales also allow us to share the plants we have and find the plants we want. The plant sales are always fun and a good time to introduce others to the benefits of native plants.

The natives blooming in my yard, which are almost all from our past sales, are beautiful hardy plants that survive with minimal care. While I enjoy their beauty and easy care, I also like the memories I associate with them. When I pass by the wonderful magenta berries on the **American beautyberries** (*Callicarpa Americana*), I think of digging them as small seedlings from **Marie Caillet**'s yard for one of our sales. When I watch shimmering ruby-throated hummingbirds (*Archilochus colubris*) and yellow cloudless sulfur butterflies

# Trinity Forks Native Plant Press:

The Newsletter of the Trinity Forks Chapter,  
Native Plant Society of Texas

September 2004

(*Pboebis sennae*) dance about the bright blooms of my **flame acanthus** (*Anisacanthus wrightii*) and **Turk's cap** (*Malvaviscus arboreus* var. *drummondii*), I think of **Kathy Scott** and **Kathy Saucier**. The **passionvine** (*Passiflora incarnata*) twirling over the garden fence remind me of the leafless "sticks in pots" that **Mike Mizell** brought to a spring plant sale. The lovely pink flowers on my **rose mallow** (*Pavonia lasiopetala*) remind me of **Joan and John Cross**. The spikes of red on my **scarlet sage** (*Salvia coccinea*) remind me of **Dorothy Thetford**. Waving wands of **inland sea oats** (*Chasmanthium latifolium*) always bring **Louise** and **Lou Kraft** to mind. There are so many others, from **purple coneflowers** (*Echinacea purpurea*) and **Becca Dickstein**, to **false gaura** (*Stenosiphon linifolius*) and **Fonda Fox**, without even mentioning the flowers of spring and summer. I hope you will take a walk through your own yard to survey your plants and think about what you have to share and what you would like to plant. Prepare now for our fall plant sale to make your own yard and others' yards and memories a bit brighter.

— Marilyn Blanton



## Our September Program

**Kathy Saucier**, a Trinity Forks member, will present the September program, *Native Plant Foods*. She will discuss picking and preparation of mesquite beans and prickly pear tunas. There will be displays of the foods about which she will speak. Kathy hopes to have several of the recipes for people to taste (biscuits, jelly, candy, dessert) as well as print-outs of recipes and ordering information about a book.

Kathy started using native plants in her yard in the early 80's and joined NPSOT in 1991. She was certified as a Wildscape Instructor by TPWD prior to the Master Naturalist Program coming along. After that, she gave a few talks on Wildscaping and started consulting on landscaping with native plants to attract wildlife.

Kathy and her plant collecting-partner, **Joan Cross**, go out each September to collect **mesquite** beans when they ripen and watch for **prickly pear** fruit too. Joan Cross will be assisting Kathy with this program.

Please, members, *consider bringing samples of native plant foods* that you have, recipes, books, etc on the subject and, if possible, samples for tasting. The more, the merrier! Also, please try to *bring one (1) plant or seed packet* to be used as a door prize or raffle prize during the meeting.



## Butterfly Garden on Northlake Trail

*Something to see in October!*

by Becca Dickstein

Three years ago, our neighbor **Marvin Jones** decided that he was tired of mowing his lawn. I can't blame him -- from what I understand, my husband is kind of sick of mowing himself. Me? I don't do lawns, but that's another story. Marvin hired our own **Owen Yost** to design a replacement landscape. It was installed by Harpool's, who sadly went out of business a year and a half ago. Before the landscape was installed, Marvin practiced on the shape of the beds by only mowing in between the planned beds and letting the grass grow where the beds were to be. That created some talk in the neighborhood, not all positive.

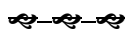
Finally, on one of the first cooler days of fall 2001, the landscapers came to install the new plants. The plants that Owen Yost chose for Marvin's front yard were natives and well-adapted imports. In addition to **liriope**, **vinca**, and several other plants, Mr. Yost chose **Mexican plum** trees, climbing native **honeysuckle**, and **Turk's cap** for the Jones' front yard. And *Eupatorium greggii*, or **Gregg's mistflower!**

All of the plants have done splendidly. They required no special soil amendments when they were planted - the plants were simply unpotted and placed in the native soil, which works well with native plants. They have also required no fertilizers nor pesticides -- the plants simply do themselves. Now, *that's* my kind of garden! Mr. Jones has quite a marvelous display for about 9-10 months of the year.

About the middle of October is the best time of year to see Marvin Jones's front yard. That's when the blue Gregg's mistflower is in its fullest bloom. For several weeks, there will be a carpet of blue flowers covered by hundreds, if not thousands, of butterflies. The first year, there were quite a few butterflies, and Marvin Jones's mistflowers and butterflies were featured in a color photo on the front page of the *Denton Record-Chronicle*. Last year, the numbers of butterflies were simply astonishing. We photographed some six different species of butterflies, even though the majority was Monarch butterflies in migration. Another neighbor had a yard sale in October last year, and people who came for the yard sale simply stayed to watch the butterflies. Some went home and brought their kids to see the spectacle.

This year, the plants have done quite well, so come October, there should be something quite nice to see. The address is 2225 North Lake Trail - come and take a peek at what a native garden can do!

*p.s.* You may be wondering about maintenance for this garden. It gets weed-whacked once a year. That's it!



## Native Plants Bring Wild Birds To Your Yard

by G. Owen Yost

A n undeniable fact is that a native, natural garden attracts wild birds. Lots of them! They are a good barometer of your garden's natural appeal. An appealing garden (to a wild bird) contains the four basic necessities: (1) fresh, clean food; (2) fresh, clean water; (3) comfortable nesting sites; and (4) safe shelter.

Wild birds focus on native, Texas plants before they resort to perching on or munching on imported, alien species. After all, their ancestors (probably going back thousands of years) have learned to exist on whatever grows naturally here.

So this leads to the clear fact that where there are native, Texas plants in abundance, the birds of Texas will like to hang out. Sometimes they get tricked by temporarily-attractive exotics; like the **bougainvillea**, which looks great to a hummingbird, but wastes their time because it has very little nectar for them. Once a bird gets tricked like this, it flies away and you may never see it again.

Certain birds are attracted to certain native plants and certain environments. Knowing bird species' likes and dislikes helps you plant the appropriate plants and attract the birds in an effective way, instead of just throwing your money around. The size of your yard matters far less than the quality of the food and habitat.

There is no one yard that will attract all kinds of birds (just like no one yard is suitable for all plant species). So my advice is to concentrate on the group of native birds that already favors your environment, be it wooded, a meadow, near wetlands, or even urbanized. Do this by concentrating on the appropriate native plants. My wooded lot is naturally ideal for most songbirds. So I've planted **beautyberry**, **inland sea oats**, **salvia**, **turk's cap**, **ironweed**, **lantana**, **mistflower**, **Mexican plum** (to name just a few) to entice the songbirds that naturally gambol in this neighborhood. Examples: cardinals, chickadees, house finches, goldfinches, hummingbirds, titmice, robins, bluejays, cedar waxwings, mockingbirds, several kinds of woodpeckers, and the occasional oriole, warbler or even roadrunner.

The bonus is that the activity around the native plants also piques the curiosity of birds that happen to be in my neighbors' yards, or are just passing through. They inherently recognize the native plants as food, shelter (or whatever) and join in.

Then, with a few native plants in your yard, you get to watch everything that's going on.



## Your yard doesn't have to be brown just because it's hot

by G. Owen Yost

**U**nder the grindingly excessive heat and not enough soaking rain, most yards in North Texas are declining to an unattractive color. Some call it tan—I call it unnecessary. No amount of water or fertilizer will ever make it healthy again, and they could easily damage a traditional lawn permanently.

There are gobs and gobs of plants that are colorful and perky at this time of year, but many folks (for some odd reason) prefer to complain that the climate here is killing their landscape. This is not New England, folks! Maybe it's time to try the plants that are used to North Texas. Here are 10 tough species that do fine in our North Texas summer and need little (if any) extra water. There are others, of course, but these have proven themselves in this area, summer after summer:

☞ **Lantana.** This is one of my favorite flowers for color all during a hot summer. It's available in red, orange, yellow, white, purple and multi-colored. For some reason, the orange and yellow ones take the heat and sun better. Several of them planted about a foot apart shows them off best, and lets them grow unto a solid mass of color. They'll freeze to the ground each winter, but will return enthusiastically late each spring if mulched.

☞ **Native oaks.** The oaks in our area include several species, like the **bur** oak, **chinquapin** oak, **shumard** oak, **post** oak and **lacey** oak. An introduced one -- the **sawtooth** oak -- has done quite well, too. These are big trees (when they mature) and tantalize you with a promise of cooling shade. In my designs, I often use the bur oak (with a trunk about 2 feet in diameter) as a replacement for when a native post oak goes into decline.

☞ **Flame leaf sumac.** Starting about mid-August, the flame leaf sumac is true to its name. The leaves turn a brilliant, glowing red when most other plants are fading from the heat. It prefers some moisture (such as in a low spot) as long as the ground drains all right. In the winter, the large seed heads remain, encouraging over-wintering birds to visit.

☞ **Vitex.** This is a tall, bushy shrub covered with violet-colored flower spikes each summer. It has naturalized quite well here and seems to love the harsh environment of North Texas. Since the ubiquitous crape myrtles have so many problems, I often use the vitex in my designs as an alternative where it's particularly sunny and dry.

☞ **Beautyberry.** When it's 100 degrees in the shade, this plant thrives! The beautyberry is a tall shrub, getting to 6 or 7 feet. Its gracefully drooping branches are covered with purple berries in the fall. Birds go

crazy over them and try to gobble up the berries the second they ripen. It'll take our extreme heat—as an understory shrub—requiring some shade.

☞ **Mexican buckeye.** This is not really a buckeye, nor is it from Mexico. From about 5 feet away, it looks just like a redbud tree. But it withstands our normally dry conditions far better than most trees. The soil it likes is whatever's available with hardly any fertilizer. It takes full sun quite well, flowering a delicate pinkish-purple in the spring and often turning a nice yellow in the fall.

☞ **Red cedar.** Often called an Eastern red cedar, it isn't a true cedar at all. It's a **juniper**, with needles that stay green all winter and an uncanny ability to put up with a hot, dry Texas summer. Over decades, it can become a full-sized tree, but is normally used in the landscape as a short tree or large shrub. Its dense, evergreen foliage is home to many birds.

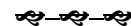
☞ **Yaupon hollies.** The traditional yaupon holly keeps its leaves all winter long. The one I like best, however, is sold as the **possumhaw holly** and is festooned with hundreds of red-orange berries, even in the coldest weather. It really stands out, and does best when nobody waters, sprays, prunes or fertilizes it.

☞ **Ironweed.** This flower has showy purple blooms right now and is a real hummingbird magnet. Superstitious people are alarmed by the "weed" in the name, but should concentrate on the "iron" part, implying durability and toughness. It needs water only in an extreme drought.

☞ **Buffalo grass.** This is the only native Texas lawn grass -- and the only lawn grass that hardly needs any water at all. Its roots go down 3 or 4 feet, whereas most lawn grasses have much, much shallower roots -- and are harder hit by drought. To the eye, it looks like a traditional lawn. There are other native grasses, like **switchgrass**, **sideoats grama** and **bluestem**, that grow taller, and are certainly worth planting in the toughest part of your landscape, too.

Whatever you choose, hold off until it cools a bit before planting—late September at the earliest. Fall planting may seem strange if you're from up north, but in Texas, it's by far the best time to plant all but the most tender plants and annuals. Resist the temptation to "improve" the soil a lot. A touch of compost is usually OK, but most native plants prefer our soil just the way nature made it. In fact, they may get weak if their soil is augmented a lot.

These are just 10 plants that are doing quite well with little or no extra water, when almost everything else in the landscape is turning brown. Of course, they'll do best with a layer of mulch on the root area -- simulating the forest floor. Try them, because a typical summer in Texas is nothing like a summer where those pretty plant catalogs are written.



## Locating Native Vegetables and “Potatoes”

by Harriet S. Horton

When you decide that you want or need to prepare some native plant foods, there are some procedures to follow. An informative book is the *NASCO Field Guide to Edible & Useful Wild Plants of North America* by Myron C. Chase. This field guide lists the necessary procedures for procuring these foods as follows:

1. We decide that we want or need a certain item.
2. We turn to the relevant page(s) in the field guide to identify the location, description, etc. of the desired plant.
3. We find a suitable location with the use of maps, etc. and begin looking for the plant.
4. After we think that we have found the desired plant, we check the leaves, fruit and root to be sure that we have the correct plant.
5. Returning to the relevant chart in the field guide, we decide how we shall prepare the food plant.
6. We take only what we need, leaving plenty to restock the supply, so we can return another time. If we have any left, it can be dried, or perhaps frozen, and used later. We may decide to prepare the leftover/ planned over portion by a different method. (See last month’s article for cooking methods.)
7. We keep notes, perhaps in a journal, as to where the plant had been found, how it was used, etc. Notes about seasoning and individual taste will add to our account for future reference.

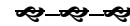
It is a good rule to prepare small quantities of any plant new to us in case any of us has any ill effects. If there are any ill effects, they will show usually within four hours.

Most native plant vegetables are available only during the growing seasons. In spring we can find **Bellwort** shoots, **Burdock** roots and **Maple** seeds. In summer we can gather young nuts of **Basswood** (early), **Burdock** stalks, flowers of **Cattail**, roots of **Salsify** (also called **Goat’s Beard**), young pods of **Milkweed**, young **Puffballs** (fungi to fry), pods of **Redbud** and seeds of the **Vetches**. Again in autumn we can dig roots of **Burdock**.

As for “potatoes” in spring, autumn and winter we can dig **Arrowhead**, **Bullrush**, **Water Lotus**, **White Water Lily** and **Yellow Pond Lily**. **Solomon’s Seal** can be dug all year, but **Jerusalem Artichoke** should be dug only in Autumn. **Ground nut** (*Apois tuberosa*), a member of the pea family, is found only East of the Mississippi River and is the only plant identified by Myron Chase to have possible ill effects. One collection of tubers, that he made during late autumn,

after a freeze, caused him to have severe nausea after cooking. The seeds can be used like peas or beans. While not all of these plants useful as foods can be found in Texas, who says that we stay home all the time? A vacation might give us to opportunity to travel and find plants that do not grow in our area.

We all prefer to season our foods. Salt can be found in the ashes of **Sunflowers**, **Hickory** bark and **Coltsfoot**. Sugars can be used in place of salt. Pepper can be obtained in the dried and powdered roots of **Jack-in-the-pulpit** and in **Smartweed** leaves. **Wild Ginger** and **Onions** also can be used as seasonings. A form of **tobacco** found in the inner bark of **red osier dogwood** is useful for repelling insects from food plants. **Bouncing Bet** and **Yuccas** provide soap and shampoo. A **Scouring Rush** provides a scouring pad to use after cooking. Maybe some of us will have opportunities soon to go outdoors and find some native foods to supplement our usual menus of hot dogs and hamburgers, etc. If you can, dry some food samples and save them for display at the September meeting. On vacation be sure to take reference materials as well as cooking vessels, utensils, a camera and journal!



## Native Flours

Read has been called the staff of life. Flour is a good wild food as it keeps well and is easy to carry. Flour may be made from the tuber, roots, nuts or seeds of many plants and the color and taste cover a wide range. The part of the plant to be used is dried by sun or fire (a faster method), then ground or crushed. Large fibers, etc. are sifted out. There are special instructions for some plants, such as hulling needed for acorns.

**Plants that can be used for flour include:**

**Solomon’s Seal** (rootstock) can be harvested all year. In the Autumn **Butternut** (nut), **Hazelnut** (nuts), **Jerusalem artichoke** (tuber), **Oak** (acorn) and **Sunflower** (seed) can be harvested. In Autumn, Winter and Spring these can be harvested: **Arrowhead** (tuber), **Bracken** (rootstock), **Brier** (rootstock), **Bulrush** (rootstock), **Cattails** (rootstock), **Water Lotus** (rootstocks, seeds), **Evening Primrose** (rootstock), **Jack-in-the-pulpit** (corm), **Sedge** (tuber), **Skunk Cabbage** (roots) and **Yellow Pond Lily** (tuber).

It is important that flours can be stored for future use as you will note that none can be harvested in summer. **Bur Oak** acorns are shelled, boiled, soaked and pounded into a paste; then the paste is dried. **White Oak** acorns are pounded and put into a strainer with water running through until it runs clear; then the paste is dried. **Arrowhead** is best when fried. **Bulrush** can

be dried after cooking. **Butternut** nuts are pounded and boiled; the oil is skimmed off for cooking oil or hair oil; pounded nutmeats are dried for flour. Dried rootstock of **cattails** is pounded for flour. **Evening primrose** roots are found by looking for the rosettes of the new plants; cook the roots, grind and dry them. **Hazelnuts** are ground or pounded, then dried. **Jack-in-the-pulpit** corms are dried and ground for flour. **Jerusalem artichoke** tubers are cooked and dried for flour. **Hard Sedge** tubers must be cooked and then ground into flour. **Skunk Cabbage** roots are cooked, then dried and ground into flour. **Solomon's Seal** rootstock is dried and ground into flour. **Sunflower** seeds are crushed and used as flour, such as for thickening soup. **Yellow Pond Lily** tubers are best fried, but can be boiled, then ground and dried.

Any recipes that you have tried are welcome additions to my files and the display for the September program.

—Harriet S. Horton



## CALENDAR

THE TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETS THE 4<sup>TH</sup> THURSDAY OF JAN–MAY AND SEPT–OCT AT 7 P.M. IN ROOM 110 OF THE UNT EESAT BUILDING (AVE C & HICKORY) IN DENTON, TEXAS.

**Thursday, Sep 23, 7:00 p.m.** ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at UNT EESAT Building, Room 110. **Kathy Saucier** will speak on *Native Plant Foods*. ☞

**Saturday, Sep 25, 10 a.m.** ☞ Field trip to **Meritt Bois-D-Arc Ranch**, just north of Denton, to see bison ranching. Pastures have some native grasses. There will be an opportunity to purchase healthful, delicious bison meat, so if you are interested, you might want to bring a cooler. Leave from the Cracker Barrel Restaurant near I-35 & Hwy 380 in Denton at 10am *sharp*; return around noon. If you have questions, call **Mike Mizell** at 940-382-8551. ☞

**Thursday, Oct 28, 7:00 p.m.** ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at UNT EESAT Building, Room 110. **Dr. Camelia Maier** will present flora of the Galapagos Islands, comparing them to our s. ☞

## Proposed Slate of Officers for 2005

Our election of new officers will take place at our October meeting. The current Board is proposing the following slate. Other nominations are, as always, welcome. Contact any current board member.

President—**Cynthia Maguire**  
Vice President—**Owen Yost**  
Secretary—**Lon Turnbull**  
Treasurer—**Caroline Polliard**



## Current Officers/Board Members

President <b>Marilyn Blanton</b>	940-464-7775 <i>marilyn@postoakplace.com</i>
Vice Pres. <b>Dorothy Thetford</b>	940-382-9344 <i>dthetford@mymailstation.com</i>
Programs/Education <b>Harriet Horton</b>	817-847-1816 <i>Harriet_Horton@hotmail.com</i>
Secretary <b>Lon Turnbull</b>	940-323-8999 <i>lont58@aol.com</i>
Treasurer <b>Caroline Polliard</b>	940-382-0957
Membership <b>Laurie Hammett</b>	940-383-3287 <i>lhammett@gte.net</i>
Ways & Means <b>Cathy Lustgarten</b>	972-306-1088 <i>drgoodrad@comcast.net</i>
Hospitality <b>Marilyn Martin</b>	940-382-8014 <i>marilyn_martin@hotmail.com</i>
Field Trips <b>Mike Mizell</b>	940-382-8551 <i>mmizell@webtv.net</i>
Historian <b>Shari Withey</b>	940-458-1273 <i>willowbendgarden@aol.com</i>
Publicity <b>Irene Hanson</b>	972-539-9471 <i>ICHanson@metlspan.com</i>
Newsletter <b>John Vandigriff</b>	972-436-0184 <i>jhnvan@comcast.net</i>

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**Join the Native Plant Society of Texas—Trinity Forks Chapter.** If you wish to join (or renew) indicate your category of membership, then clip and mail this application with the appropriate remittance to:  
**NPSOT, P.O. Box 891, Georgetown, TX 78627.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Individual \$20 ( ) Benefactor \$100 ( ) Family \$25  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Group \$35 ( ) Senior \$15 ( ) Patron \$50  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Corporation \$1000 ( ) Student \$15  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*The purpose of the Native Plant Society of Texas is to promote the conservation, research and utilization of the native plants and plant habitats of Texas, through education, outreach and example.*

## *Oyez! Oyez! Oyez!*

### **Fall Plant Sale soon to be In Session**

**ALL YE HAVING SURPLUS NATIVE PLANTS TO OFFER DRAW NIGH AND BE SEEN**  
**NPSOT Trinity Forks Chapter, Presiding.**

What: **A sidewalk plant sale.**

When: **Saturday, October 9th, 9 am to 1 pm.**

Where: **Wild Bird Center, 1601 Brinker Rd #108, Denton (between Loop 288 and Walmart)**

**Rain date:** at the October chapter meeting.

*Can you work at the sale? Tell Cathy L! Do you have plants or seeds to donate? Tell Cathy what you have! Have a wish list of plants to buy? Tell Cathy L! Have a friend interested in native plants? Bring them to the sale! Do you have empty flats/trays to carry purchases? Bring 'em! Workers please bring sunscreen, hat, and water. Please label each pot with plant ID. Do you solemnly swear to spread your love of native plants, tell the native truth, and share the joy of gardening with natives? This sale's for you! Bring some bird-friendly plants!*

*Many thanks* to member **Owen Yost** for allowing us to hold our sale at his new store!!!

Questions, comments, suggestions, and bloomin' ideas, contact **Cathy Lustgarten**, phone 972-306-1088 or email at [drgoodrad@comcast.net](mailto:drgoodrad@comcast.net)




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 Trinity Forks Chapter  
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