



Trinity Forks Native Plant Press

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

January 2005

From the Prez....

Feeling Flexible?

With a new year, we frequently anticipate change in the air. This year looks to be no exception! I hope you're feeling flexible, because this newsletter is full of news about changes in store for Trinity Forks.

We have begun what will pass for winter in north Texas. I am always grateful for a little cold weather, realizing that next summer's insects will be inversely proportional to the amount of time we spend below freezing now. Winter offers its own unique pleasures, too. The recent hard freezes softened the fruits on a **crabapple** tree (*Pyrus angustifolia*) in our back yard. Several fell off, making a mess on the deck below. The next day, a flock of American robins flew in and had a feast. I need not have concerned myself with the mess—the robins picked it clean! We had a front row seat for the whole party and spent a pleasant afternoon watching. We see mockingbirds check the berries on our **possumhaw holly** (*Ilex decidua*) regularly, waiting until February for fermented fruit. (We'll have another feast then!) Of course, part of winter is anticipating spring. My garden has lots of promising signs: **lyre-leaf sage** (*Salvia lyrata*), **Gulf coast penstemon** (*Penstemon cobaea*), **rain lily** (*Cooperia pedunculata*), **fall obedient plant** (*Physostegia virginiana*), **spiderwort** (*Tradescantia* sp.), **spider lily** (*Lycoris radiata*), **columbine** (*Aquilegia canadensis*), and—a personal favorite—**Texas vervain** (*Verbena halei*), are all up and looking green in spite of the cold weather. Even now, it is pleasant to stroll around the back yard and enjoy watching them grow.

Another change in the air is a **new board** for Trinity Forks. I am excited to work with so many dedicated and knowledgeable people. Be sure to look at the list of names in this issue so you will know who's doing what this year—and thanks to **everyone** who says "Yes!" when one of these folks calls to ask for help with a chapter activity. In this newsletter, you will find a list of program topics and speakers for 2005. **Harriet Horton** has prepared a great line-up of experts to enrich our understanding of our

ecoregion. Plan ahead a little, mark your calendar and invite a friend to come along! **Lon Turnbull** has worked hard creating www.npsot.org/trinityforks, a new chapter website. Our chapter plant list, some photos, and meeting information are all up and running now. Some parts are still under development, so you'll want to keep checking back often. **Laurie Hammett** is working on a new TF membership directory to hand out at the January meeting.

To uphold the NPSOT mission statement, our Education committee, led by **Dorothy Thetford**, has lots of great new ideas (see *Dorothy's article in this newsletter*). The board has agreed to the committee's request for 5 minutes at the beginning of each chapter meeting for an educational demonstration. There will be information-packed displays at each meeting as well, and you'll want to come early to see it all! In fact, the board has decided to try an experiment: Come early (6:30 p.m.) for a social time, wonderful refreshments provided by **Marilyn Martin**, and a good look at the displays before the program begins promptly at 7:00 p.m. We will try this for a few months to see what the response is from our members. If it works, we will keep it going.

The biggest change for Trinity Forks this year is our **new meeting location**: we are going back to our roots at TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY. (See the back cover story for more details about the building and parking arrangements.) New parking regulations at UNT made it difficult to continue meeting there, so the board requested that **Laurie Hammett** and I look into meeting at TWU. We have been offered some really beautiful facilities and we believe you will all enjoy coming there. I look forward to seeing each of you there soon!

—*Cynthia Maguire* ☞



Our January Program

A certified Texas Master Naturalist, **Bonnie Bradshaw** is public relations coordinator for Texas Discovery Gardens in Dallas. This gives her the opportunity to use her professional

background (a journalism degree from UNT) to promote the importance of restoring the natural environment in urban areas. In her spare time, Bonnie is vice president of the DFW Wildlife Coalition, a nonprofit organization that provides free information on effective, humane solutions to wildlife problems.

Located in Fair Park, Texas Discovery Gardens is the first certified organic public garden in Texas showcasing both native and adapted plants in a beautiful year-round urban oasis. Ms. Bradshaw's presentation will be *Backyard Wildlife Habitats: Butterflies, Birds & Botany*. She will discuss the basic ingredients of a backyard habitat, the reasons that birds and butterflies are drawn to specific native plants and the "do's and don'ts" of attracting backyard wildlife. ♡



Spring Joint Symposium

sponsored by

NPSOT and Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

Saturday, February 26, 2005

Those Other Texas Natives

**Grasses, Ferns, Sedges, Cacti,
Yuccas, Agaves, Nolinias**

and

Soils and Organic Practices

at the

**Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
Austin, Texas**

Go to www.npsot.org for details
or call (512) 292-4100

Digging into our Roots

A Short History of Trinity Forks

Carroll Abbott and others established Texas Wildflower Day, celebrated each year on the fourth Saturday in April at TWU, sometime in the 1970s. The NPSOT organization grew out of this in 1980. In the early years of NPSOT, there were regional groups that met periodically, and the North Texas Region had one of the most active groups. As the statewide membership grew, several people from Denton who attended the NT Regional events began to realize that there were probably enough members to support a Denton chapter. In late 1989 several people, including **Kathy Scott**, began the process of petitioning the state organization to form a Denton chapter. In January 1990, an organizational meeting was held in the Extension Service meeting room (located in the downtown Post Office building at that time). **John Cooper** was very helpful and supportive in getting it going. A considerable number of people showed up for the meeting. There were, I think, two follow-up meetings held there. With insider help from some of our TWU contacts, we were then able to move our meetings to the TWU Student Union building. Our first program there was presented by **Arnold Davis** speaking about the new **Thomsen Foundation** project. Our annual plant sale began that very first year as an Earth Day event (the 20th anniversary of Earth Day).

For the first 2 or 3 years, our dear **Gertrude Gibson** appeared at every meeting with an array of her famous refreshments and a cheerful greeting. **Dr. Mary Evelyn Huey** has always been a very loyal and supportive member of our chapter. Other regular attendees in our early years were **Mike Irwin** (our first president), **Barbara Pettijohn** (our second president), **Barbara Anthony**, **Kathy Scott**, **Mike Mizell**, **Bill & Jan Neiman**, **Shirley Lusk**, **Dr. James "Bud" Gardenhire**, **Kay Goodman**, **Wilma Haggard**, **Dr. Robert Collier** (He was chair of the TWU Biology Dept when Carroll Abbott was at TWU. Bob was very involved in the planning of Wildflower Day each year.), **Kay Warmerdam**, **David & Bobby Thomas**, **Sue & Allan Vik**, **Mary McCain**, **Lois Gilliland**, and **Mike Cochran**. (My sincere apologies to anyone whom

(continued on page 3)

Announcing Trinity Forks Program Topics & Speakers for 2005

Make plans now to attend each month. It will be a great year for Trinity Forks! Each of these speakers is an enthusiastic expert on the topic they will be presenting, and excited to share their knowledge with us. The program portion of our meetings will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. in ACT 301.

Bring a friend and come early at 6:30 p.m. to see the display tables set up by the Education committee and enjoy refreshments before the program begins. This social time will be held in the lobby on the second floor of the ACT building.

For the first time this year, our chapter will hold a meeting in August, on the 4th Thursday as usual. It will be an ice cream social and – if everything is ready in time – a book signing to unveil the new *East Texas Flora*. If you have a homemade ice cream freezer, please let **Marilyn Martin** or **Cynthia Maguire** know. Plan to bring your family and friends for a fun evening!

JAN 27 – Bonnie Bradshaw, Texas Discovery Gardens. Topic: *Backyard Wildlife Habitats: Butterflies, Birds & Botany*

FEB 25 – Russell Stevens, Agricultural Specialist at the Noble Foundation. Topic: *Prairies and Grasses*

MAR 24 – Dr. Howard Arnott, University of Texas at Arlington. Topic: *Crystals in Plants*

APR 28 – Bill Lindemann, past president of NPSOT. Topic: *Big Bend National Park: A Naturalist's Dreamland*

MAY 26 – Dr. George Diggs, Austin College. Topic: *The Cross Timbers Across Time--a History of Cross Timbers Forest Plants*

AUG 25 – Ice Cream Social and Book Signing-- Dr. George Diggs and Barney Lipscomb from BRIT will bring the new *East Texas Flora Vol.I*.

SEP 22 – John Cooper, TAMU Agricultural Extension Agent for Denton. Topic: *Landscaping with Native Trees*

OCT 27 – TO BE ANNOUNCED



A Short History . . . (continued from page 2)

we left out; you were no less important.) Several of these people had been deeply involved in the original Wildflower Days and the founding of NPSOT. We owe them a debt of gratitude for their long dedication to native plants and support of our chapter.

Our Trinity Forks Chapter was an enthusiastic, dedicated group, and we were quickly off and running. We have always been blessed with people stepping forward when needed to provide strong leadership and have been able to attract excellent speakers for our programs. After a few years, we began having problems scheduling space in the TWU Student Center. We then moved to the Ben E. Keith building for a few years. When they changed their rules about groups meeting there, we moved to the EESAT bldg at the University of North Texas.

Due to increasing enrollment at UNT, parking and room scheduling have become uncertain there, and so we are returning home to Texas Woman's University. Now we come full circle; may our renewed association with TWU be happy and enduring.

— **Mike Mizell**, with much help from **Kathy Scott** and **Shirley Lusk** ☺



Texas Society for Ecological Restoration Call for Papers

Abstracts are currently being accepted for the 10th annual Texas SER conference to be held on June 10-12, 2005 in Denton, Texas. Topics are open to all areas of restoration with requests in the following areas:

*Cross-Timbers
Tallgrass Prairies
Riparian and Wetlands areas
Restoration and Community Involvement
Education, Volunteerism, and Philosophy*

Relevant abstracts and proposals from all disciplines, backgrounds and experience levels are welcome and should be submitted to Kenneth Steigman, conference chair, at steigman@unt.edu.

Updates and additional information may be found at www.cep.unt.edu/sertex.html or by calling (940)565-4332.

Education Is Exciting!

Exciting ideas abound for 2005! The Board has granted our committee 5 minutes of "education time" at the beginning of each meeting. We've labeled it the *Early Bird Special* because if you're late, you'll miss it! During that brief time we will provide a plant-related demonstration, along with an assignment. In January, **Becca Dickstein**, Ph.D., UNT botanist, will give a quick-n-easy seed-planting demo. You'll want to be in your seat by 7:00 p.m.!

Elinor Hughes will provide a "QUESTION POT" into which anyone may drop plant-related questions. If you have a question which needs to be answered immediately, you may leave your name on the form provided and we'll hitch you up to the most knowledgeable authority for a personal discussion. If your question is not time sensitive, we will try to answer it in the following newsletter.

Rachel Biggerstaff has invited the local nurseries to provide a list of their native plant inventory. She will have printed copies for our display table, and will likely update those lists in mid spring, and again in the fall.

Kathy Saucier has researched her extensive files and will provide plant lists for various specialty gardens; *i.e.*, plants for shade gardens, for butterfly gardens, for wildlife habitat, for pollinators, for full sun, for fragrance, and for water gardens.

Chris Stogsdill will keep all of us coordinated with the display table (*located in the second floor lobby*). The January display table will give you a chance to "Name that Seed." And each month thereafter, you'll be able to test your memory by playing our "name game."

Our goal is to send every new member and visitor home with a live, native plant. (If any of you members have extra small plants to share, let us know @ 940-382-9344.) It's a great committee with fun and educational ideas. Come and learn with us on Thursday, January 27, 2005.

— Education Chair, **Dorothy Thetford** ☞



Prescribed Burning Seminar

Jan 27, 1—5 p.m.
Sponsored by the Noble Foundation
Call Melissa at 580.224.6411 to register

Texas Birds Look For Native Nest Material

It has been observed that birds look for familiar, native plants to make nests, and are attracted to sources of such nesting materials. More and more, however, the fields and forests where they got it in past years have developed into shopping centers, parking lots and subdivisions.

The materials that birds use for nest-building can be almost anything that's somewhat small, stringy and lightweight. Given a choice, wild birds often choose natural nesting material from native plants. Many look for tall, native grasses for nesting material. If you really want birds to nest in your yard, leave an area in tall grass (at least a foot), letting it stand through the winter. Robins, several kinds of sparrows, meadowlarks, red-winged blackbirds, flycatchers and bluebirds use grasses enthusiastically. Some favorites are **bluestem** (*Pascopyrum smithii*), **gramma** (*Bouteloua sp.*), **indiangrass** (*Sorghastrum sp.*), **muhly** (*Muhlenbergia sp.*) and **threeawn** (*Aristida sp.*).

The typical mowed lawn is a very unattractive and sterile habitat for most birds that need to flee and hide quickly when a predator appears. Many lawns are also treated with pesticides, weed killers and chemical fertilizers, which can end up harming wildlife – or at least causing birds to go elsewhere. (Remember DDT?)

Birds often use other native plants for nest material, too. Thin strips of bark from many types of trees native to the Denton area often end up in nests. Thin bark stripped from young trees [like **Eve's necklace** (*Sophora affinis*), **Mexican plum** (*Prunus mexicana*), **redbud** (*Cercis canadensis*), **red cedar** (*Juniperus virginiana*), **roughleaf dogwood** (*Cornus drummondii*) or **cedar elm** (*Ulmus crassifolia*)] are sought by birds. Also, small chips of bark [**oaks** (*Quercus sp.*) are a favorite] are used to cushion the bottom of nests.

Actually, I've tried to pull together a complete list of native nesting material. It turns out, however, that almost anything is a candidate. And since birds were here in north Texas thousands of years before humans, the more native and familiar a material is, the more likely it is to be used in a nest.

— **G. Owen Yost** ☞



CALENDAR

Thursday, January 27, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables (*Name that Seed*) and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby; program begins at 7:00 p.m. in Room 301. The *EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* will be *Seed Planting*. Our featured speaker will be **Bonnie Bradshaw**, public relations coordinator for Texas Discovery Gardens in Dallas. Ms. Bradshaw will present *Backyard Wildlife Habitats: Butterflies, Birds & Botany*. ☞

Thursday, February 24, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables (*Name that Seedling*) and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby; program begins at 7:00 p.m. in Room 301. The *EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* will be *Rosettes*. Our featured speaker will be **Russell Stevens** from the Noble Foundation. His topic is *Prairies & Grasses*. ☞

Saturday, February 19, 2005, 9:00—12:00 ☞ Denia Garden Workday. The Native Plant Committee at Keep Denton Beautiful is asking for volunteers to help clean up, weed, spread mulch, etc. Bring your gloves and gardening tools. Rain date is Feb. 26th. Contact **Cynthia Maguire** or **Owen Yost** for details. ☞

Saturday, February 26, 2005, all day. ☞ THOSE OTHER TEXAS NATIVES, the SPRING JOINT SYMPOSIUM sponsored by NPSOT and Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, will be at the Wildflower Center in Austin, TX. Visit www.npsot.org or call (512) 292-4100 for details. ☞

Monday, March 7, 1:00-1:45 p.m. ☞ Bill Dunmire will give a slide-lecture, "*Our Gift from Spain: Colonial Farming and Ranching Come to Texas.*" The talk is based on his book, recently published by the University of Texas Press, *Gardens of New Spain: How Mediterranean Plants and Foods Changed America.* The lecture is in the Commissioner's Courtroom on the square, Denton. ☞

Thursday, March 24, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables (*Name that Rosette*) and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby; program is at 7:00 p.m. in Room 301. The *EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* will be *Pressing Wildflowers*. Our featured speaker

will be **Dr. Howard Arnott** from UT Arlington presenting *Crystals in Plants*. ☞

Thursday, April 28, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables (*Name that Pressed Wildflower*) and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby; program begins at 7:00 p.m. in Room 301. . The *EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* will be *Regulations/guidelines for collecting herbarium specimens*. Our featured speaker, **Bill Lindemann**, will present *Big Bend National Park: a Naturalist's Dreamland*. Bill, a past president of NPSOT, is currently writing a book on the Trans-Pecos region. His program will inspire you to go to the Fall Symposium! ☞

THE TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETS THE 4TH THURSDAY OF JAN–MAY AND SEPT–OCT AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE ADMINISTRATION AND CLOCK TOWER (ACT) BUILDING AT TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY (OAKLAND AVE & ADMIN. DR.) IN DENTON, TEXAS.

Current Officers/Board Members

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Ways & Means	972-306-1088
Cathy Lustgarten	<i>drgoodrad@comcast.net</i>



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.

With the New Year comes a new meeting location for Trinity Forks! Please join us in 2005 at Texas Woman's University. Our new place is the TWU Administration and Clock Tower (ACT) building, an ADA accessible facility. We will meet at 6:30 p.m. for a social time in the 2nd floor lobby; and at 7:00 p.m. in room 301 for the program. As always, meetings are the **4th Thurs of Jan–May, Sep & Oct.**

the ACT building. If you have questions, please call **Laurie Hammett** at **940-898-3355**.

Directions from Gainesville: Take **I-35** South to **US 380** (University Dr.). Exit there and turn **left**, heading east into Denton. Proceed to **Bell Avenue**, which runs north and south through the TWU campus. Turn **right** onto **Bell Ave.** and go to **Administration Drive** (the second light). Turn **right**; park in a designated area.

Directions from Fort Worth: Take **I-35 W** North to US 380 (University Dr.). Exit there and turn **right**, heading east into Denton. Proceed to Bell Avenue. Turn **right** onto **Bell Ave.** and go to **Administration Dr.** (the second light). Turn **right**; park in a designated area.

Directions from Dallas: Take **I-35 E** North into Denton. Take the **Dallas Drive** exit. As Dallas Drive passes under a railroad, the road will **veer to the right** and become **Bell Avenue**. After you cross McKinney St. be prepared to turn **left** at the next light – **still on Bell Ave.** Proceed to **Administration Drive** at the top of the hill. Turn **left**; park in a designated area.

Free parking is available without a permit ONLY if you park in the areas indicated on the map: (#1) in visitor parking directly north of the Student Center, (#2) curbside on Administration Dr., or (#3) the lot west of

Native Plant Society of Texas
Trinity Forks Chapter
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