



Trinity Forks Native Plant Press

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

September 2005

From the Prez....

Surprise beginnings

After several missed opportunities, the time was finally right! **Dorothy Thetford** has been trying to show me the statuesque glory of her **Jimsonweed** (*Datura stramonium*) in full bloom, but to no avail. When I had time for an early morning visit to her garden, there were few blooms; and when the vine was covered in blooms, I could not go. When Dorothy called me last Monday, I rushed over to see. Wow! It was worth the trip! The plant *is* a vine but was literally standing up by itself high enough to reach the eaves of the house. Further, it was covered with 18 *large* white trumpet-shaped blooms! They were a genuine delight to behold. Of course, those blooms only last a single night, opening in late afternoon and fading away as the sun rises in mid-morning. Thus the challenge to mesh my schedule with the vine's!

Just as we never know the precise moment that each bloom of our precious natives will be ready for the world to view, we also never know when one of our members will be ready (and willing) to blossom in a leadership role. As the end of our 2005 program year approaches, your board is already beginning to plan for a new year, and looking for new leaders to emerge. Most board members are appointed and there is almost always a job needing a new helper. This year is no exception! A new newsletter editor is *sorely* needed (October will be the last issue that I am able to edit.) There are new plans in the works and new positions to be filled. If you are inclined to be more active in 2006, contact a current officer and tell us what you're interested in doing. Trinity Forks has a spot for you!

This year's nominating committee has worked hard to ensure the future of our chapter. Three dedicated volunteers: **Marilyn Blanton, Laurie Hammett, and Dorothy Thetford** have been diligent in searching to find the right "flowers" to

bloom for Trinity Forks in 2006! Thank you, ladies! They wish to propose the following slate of officers:

President—Cynthia Maguire

Vice President & President-Elect—Cathy Lustgarten

Secretary—Lon Turnbull

Treasurer—Caroline Polliard

As always, nominations may also be offered from the floor at our September meeting, and voting will take place at our October meeting.

Please join us on Thursday, September 22nd at 6:30 p.m. for a wonderful fall program on trees—and don't forget to bring a friend!

Cynthia Maguire ☞



Our September Program

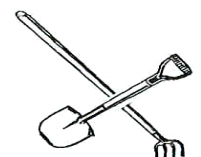
Presenting a program on native trees of Texas, **John Cooper** is the Denton County Extension Agent for Horticulture and Environmental Stewardship, and County Coordinator for the Denton County office of Texas Cooperative Extension, the Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. He also serves as the County Coordinator for the Denton County Master Gardeners Association and Chapter Advisor for the Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

John will provide guidelines for the "*Selection, Planting, and Care of Trees in Denton County*" with an emphasis on trees native to North Texas. With his guidance, you will learn the best trees to plant, what to look for when buying them, how to get the soil right before planting, proper planting methods, and aftercare including soil fertility, irrigation, pruning, and pest management. Tree plantings fail for a variety of reasons. You will also learn the causes for young tree failure and how to overcome them to achieve the highest possible success rate.

Fall is the best time to plant trees, so come to the Thursday, September 22 meeting and learn how you can enjoy the benefits of living in a world of trees.

Program Chair, Harriet Horton ☞

Digging into our Roots



Ice Cream Social, Thursday 25 Aug 05

Trinity Forks had what is planned to be our first annual ice cream social on Thursday, August 25, 2005 at the greenhouse & patio near the Benny Simpson Memorial Garden at Texas Woman's University. On our name tags we wrote something about ourselves and native plants that would start a conversation. "Bringers" of homemade ice cream included: **Kathy & Gary Saucier** – peach ice cream & cookies, **Joan Cross** – blackberry ice cream, **Dorothy & Alan Thetford** – banana ice cream, and **Cynthia Maguire** – cinnamon vanilla ice cream. Water was provided by **Marilyn Martin, Cathy Lustgarten** and the **Sauciers**; **Mike Mizell** brought brownies and two guests, **Marilyn Blanton** furnished cookies and door prizes. All brought chairs and tables. Thanks go to all who contributed to the success of the evening!

An unplanned treat was **Dr. Mary Evelyn Huey**, Past President of TWU and a founding member of Trinity Forks and NPSOT, who braved the 100+° heat and graciously spoke to those present about the history of the TWU gardens. The gardens were started in order to provide work to unemployed persons in the 1930's; they fell into neglect during the 1940's and were revived in the 1950's. More recently, the Benny Simpson Memorial Garden was started using donated plants from Trinity Forks members.

Dorothy Thetford handed out "*Name That Plant*" game cards designed by our Education Committee and attendees went searching the Benny Simpson Garden for plants to identify. Some toured the adjacent Little Chapel in the Woods that was also built in the 1930's.

Harriet Horton handed out a scavenger hunt for parent/child teams to find in the garden and around the "Texas" Pond (shaped like the state of Texas). Gary Saucier led some interactive games suitable for the hot day – a water balloon toss and a hula hoop relay race.

Our thanks to all 36 who attended for contributing to the success of the evening. TF had two membership renewals. Thanks also to **Dr. Camelia Maier's** lab staff and **George Roberson** for placing our directional signs.

Historian, Harriet Horton ☞

It's Plant Sale Time!

Which of *your* favorite natives are best planted in the Fall? Those are the ones we want you to bring to our Saturday morning sidewalk plant sale! Show and tell the rest of the world why to use natives, and why to plant them now. We will vote at the September meeting whether to hold our sale **Oct. 29 or Nov. 5**. We are very fortunate to be hosted again by **Owen Yost** and **Nancy Collins** at their Wild Bird Center store in Denton.

Bring your seedlings (sow seeds this week), or pot extra plants from your garden. We need plants native to, or well adapted to, north central Texas. Please notify me by email what you will be bringing. Not sure if it's native? If you can't find it in your favorite reference book, ask one of your fellow NPSOT members. Thanks heaps and *Grow Native!*

Ways & Means Chair, Cathy Lustgarten ☞



The Cross Timbers Across Time— A History of Cross Timbers Forest Plants

Our May program was given by **Dr. George Diggs** from Austin College. The Cross Timbers is a transition zone between the woodlands to the east and the prairies to the west and north. Its main characteristic is that of a **savannah** woodland. This region has a dramatic rainfall gradient—a decrease in annual rainfall of one inch per 15 miles of westward travel. Denton is right in the middle of this transition zone. The Post Oak savannah came into being about 1500 to 2000 years ago.

Dr. Diggs' favorite explanation for the bands of trees interspersed with grasslands is differences in soil type. In this region there are bands of clay alternating with sandy soil. The clay soil tends to hold more water at the depth of grass roots, and so the grasses grow better in clay than in sandy soil. The denser the grass, the more likely a prairie will completely burn. When a prairie does not burn, trees have a chance to grow. Thus, trees tend to have a survival chance on the sandy soils where grass is usually sparse.

George also talked about the floral and faunal changes in this region since human habitation. Overall, it was an excellent presentation!

Secretary, Lon Turnbull ☞

Education Is Exciting!

Get your memory cap on because the Education Committee will provide a display of native tree leaves to entice you back into the groove. Our September program will be a presentation about native trees of Texas, and what better exercise could we provide than a test of your tree leaf identification skills?! So, please check out the Education Committee's display of pressed leaves as we each try to "Name That Leaf."

Education Chair, Dorothy Thetford ☞
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Announcements

Help our Historian! If you have old issues of newsletters, our annual chapter report or NPSOT news, **Harriet Horton** would like help filling in the gaps in our chapter historical record. ☞

Who's feeling creative with a keyboard? The October edition of the *Native Plant Press* will be **Cynthia Maguire's** last edition as our newsletter editor, and a new editor is needed by January. ☞



CALENDAR

Thursday, Sep 22, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby. At 7:00 p.m. in Room 301 **John Cooper**, TAMU Extension Agent for Denton County, will discuss *Landscaping with Native Trees*. ☞

Saturday, Oct 1, 10:00–11:30 a.m. ☞ A Walking Tour of the Trees at Texas Woman's University, guided by our very own expert, **Smiddy Foreman**. Meet in front of ACT building (where chapter meetings are held); wear comfortable shoes. ☞

Saturday, Oct 1, 1–5 p.m. ☞ Semi-annual Sale at the Molly Hollar Wildscape Demonstration Garden Veterans Park, Arlington. All Texas native plants are locally and organically grown. Plants are propagated by Wildscape Volunteers and proceeds benefit the

four-acre demonstration garden. For more information contact **Gailon Hardin** at ghardin@flash.net. ☞

Friday-Saturday, Oct 14-15 ☞ NPSOT State Symposium in the Big Bend region. See details on the state website at www.npsot.org. ☞

Thursday, Oct 27, 6:30 p.m. ☞ TRINITY FORKS CHAPTER MEETING at Texas Woman's University in the ACT Building. At 6:30, see Display Tables and enjoy refreshments in the second floor lobby. At 7:00 p.m. in Room 301 **Dr. Rebecca Dickstein**, Associate Professor of Biochemistry at the University of North Texas, will speak on *Plant Propagation: Multiplication and Division*. ☞

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.

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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

?? ? QUESTION BOX ?? ?

Q. When do I harvest seeds from my wildflowers?

A. When the seeds have matured on the plant. A general rule is if they easily fall off of the plant without being forced, or can be lifted from the calyx and/or bract easily, or if housed in a tubular receptacle and can be up-ended and poured out, they are likely ready to harvest.

Q. Why do we concentrate on wildflowers only in the spring?

A. Uninformed. The more we learn, the more we realize that our native wildflower blooming period is ongoing from as early as late January (with tiny **bluets**) thru December (with **orchids**) Our state-wide celebration of Texas **bluebonnets** during their prime blooming period (March-April) helps each of us to be more aware of the natives yet to bloom.

Q. When do I plant my wildflower seeds?

A. Plant your spring-blooming seeds now, and hope for rain! The seeds need to germinate with the warmth of the soil, plus fall rains to provide rosettes. Some rosettes will over-winter, some will die back but have an established root system ready for early spring growth.

Q. I have very small **columbine** seedlings popping up in my flowerbed. Do I leave them alone?

A. Transplant now, while they are small, to your desired location. Be sure to allow ample space for growth; you will have a mature plant in the spring.

Q. Some of my native wildflowers have become tall and lanky. What should I do?

A. When sun-loving wildflowers are forced into partial or full shade, they continue growing, striving to reach the sun, thus becoming too tall and too lanky. Transplant those perennial plants to a sunnier location in the late fall.

---Education Committee

Native Plant Society of Texas
Trinity Forks Chapter
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