



## SYMPOSIUM REPORT

This year's symposium in Houston was well organized and well done. I think it could become a model for how to do NPSOT conferences in the future. It was certainly easy to see Cynthia Maguire's influence in putting on a conference. It appeared to be seamless, with no glitches. Also, the speakers kept everyone's attention with great talks about prairie restorations. There was a wide selection of field trips; the one Polly and I went on was excellent. We even saw a 10' alligator! The wide variety of topics covered in the workshops provided conference goers with a challenge in choosing which ones to attend. This hotel must specialize in doing small conferences, as the layout was just great, and it had numerous lounging areas, which promoted conversations with new friends. Polly and I felt the symposium was very worthwhile attending.

*Cecil Carter, President-elect*

## FALL IS FOR RECYCLING

With the cooler weather we have had, this fall should be a very good one for our landscapes. We should be able to plant successfully any and all good native and naturalized plants if we choose the right plants for the location, install them properly, and maintain them appropriately.

And if the weather doesn't go crazy, but follows a more-or-less smooth curve into winter, we should be able to plant until December. But, the sooner the better, to get roots established.

Autumn is prime time to follow Nature's lead and assist Her in the all-important recycling chores of the season. Brown leaves are not rubbish to be removed; they are food for the

worms and bugs and microbes that will, in turn, feed and protect our growing plants. We can't improve on Nature, but we can support and even boost Her along in the process of creating healthy soil to grow healthy plants.

For neatness, to speed up the natural process, and to avoid a smothering pile-up of tree leaves, mow-mulch lawn areas whenever a few inches of leaves build up.

In addition to recycling all the dead organic matter that falls on our property, to support the kind of landscapes we desire, we must import more, in the form of compost and mulch.

Finished compost, is the richest, most powerful organic fertilizer you can get. It is naturally both quick and slow release. Spread one-quarter to one-half inch on lawns, add one or two inches in beds. You don't even need to till it in, the microbes will come and do that for you.

In beds of landscape plants, cover the root zone soil/compost with two to three inches of organic mulch. This does wonders to moderate soil conditions, which encourages healthy growth of roots, as well as friendly fungi and beneficial bacteria. Bare soil makes a miserable root zone.

Compost and mulch are available from Denton's Recycling Center, and through locally owned garden centers.

Well, the wonders continue to unfurl for those of us who are on the organic path. New discoveries and revelations of how nature works are coming thick and fast. New organic products and producers are appearing regularly. More and more nurseries and professional landscapers are selling organic products and practicing organic methods.

And most important, driving this revolution, in my estimation, are the increasing numbers of home owners who are seeing that "it just makes sense" to go organic.

*Dale Branum, Trinity Forks member and  
Owner of TLC Landscapes in Denton*

### THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

#### General Meeting – Thursday, Oct. 27

Our own members, Kathy Saucier and Irene Hanson, will present the program on “**Sharing Your Natives, Multiplication and Division Made Easy.**” Kathy will describe how to successfully dig and pot plants from your yard, keep them in pots, and transplant them so that you can either expand your landscape or share them with others. Irene will show how she starts seedlings and then transfers them to pots. There should be seedlings for attendees to take home.

**NOTE:** As has frequently been the case for the October meeting, there will be lots of little ghosts and goblins in the area around the building for the TWU Halloween party. As a result, finding parking could be a bit challenging, so allow a little extra time.

### PRAIRIE DAY AT BRIT

In honor of Native Plant Week, the Botanical Research Institute of Texas is hosting a **Prairie Day** on **Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>** from **10am to 2pm**. This year's Prairie Day will feature tours of BRIT, seed harvesting and distribution, exhibits featuring our roof prairie, short informative talks, and booths for like-minded organizations. (Hopefully, some of the NPSOT chapters in the area will be there to represent NPSOT.)

As you may know, among its many other outreaches, BRIT works to educate the public about native plants, restore the prairie, and change the public's landscaping aesthetic to include more natives. Our missions are very much aligned with NPSOT's.

**Erin W. Taylor**  
Program Specialist, BRIT



### FREE POTTING SOIL

Our member, Eleanor Hughes, was at **Painted Flower Farm** recently buying some plants and noticed a huge pile of discarded potting soil in the back and learned that it is free for the taking. Kathy Saucier followed up and got these details on it from Anthony Lyle, head assistant. The soil is from their compost heap, which is made of high quality potting soil and residual fertilizer. Please tell everyone about it; there's a lot to go around. Here are the guidelines for picking it up:

1. Come during our business hours: 8am-1pm weekdays.
2. Call or email ahead of time (940-382- 3789 or [anthonylyle88@gmail.com](mailto:anthonylyle88@gmail.com)).
3. Take as much as you like!

PFF is located at 3801 Lariat Rd. in Denton. That's west of I-35 and just north of Hwy 380, across from Selwyn School.

Also, A big “Thank You” goes to Painted Flower Farm for the donation of a very large specimen of Maximilian Sunflower, our Fall NICE! Plant of the Season. This plant will be on display at the October chapter meeting and will be given away to the newest new member. So members, bring a friend and get them to join Trinity Forks!

### PARTICIPATING NICE! NURSERIES

#### Four Seasons Nursery

3333 E. University Dr, Denton, 940-566-2172  
[www.fourseasons91.com](http://www.fourseasons91.com)

#### Meador Nursery

2623 James St, Denton, 940-382-2638  
[www.meadornursery.com](http://www.meadornursery.com)

#### Painted Flower Farm

3801 Lariat Rd, Denton, 940-382-3789  
[www.paintedflowerfarm.com](http://www.paintedflowerfarm.com)

#### Schmitz Garden Center

3714 Old Settlers Rd, Flwr. Mnd, 972-724-3040  
[www.sqcdfw.com](http://www.sqcdfw.com)

#### Shades of Green Nursery

8801 Coit Rd, Frisco, 972- 335-9095  
[www.shadesofgreeninc.org](http://www.shadesofgreeninc.org)

#### Westbrook Outdoor Solutions, Inc.

1616 Arrowhead Dr, Flwr. Mnd, 972-539-8103  
[www.westbrookoutdoorsolutions.com](http://www.westbrookoutdoorsolutions.com)

## .... "Wildflowers-of-Texas"

by Dorothy Brown Thetford

Common name: Aromatic aster

Scientific name: *Aster oblongifolius*

Family: Asteraceae

Geeminy, I become hyper during the months of September and October as our native wildflowers seem to explode in every direction.

And most of my directions have been displaying yellow; yep, another and another and another yellow flower. Common sunflower, Maximilian sunflower, Willow-leaf sunflower, Broomweed, Bitterweed, Buffalobur, Partridge-pea, Golden-aster and, of course, Goldenrod are all vying for attention at the same time, to name a few.

However, the monochromatic yellows are being interrupted by our native fall-blooming asters. The most prominent one in this area is the Heath aster, which looks like fluffy white patches of cotton along fence rows and bar ditches. Of the 45 aster species of Texas, six of them are known as wild blue asters, which leads us to the new kid on the block as of mid-October... the Aromatic aster (*Aster oblongifolius*). It is also commonly known as Oblong-leaf aster.

The purplish-blue aster grows one to two feet tall on dry sandy, well-drained, disturbed soil, and can be found on the edges of tree lines and also the edges of the mower's mow line. Being a fall-bloomer, it normally gets the blade before it's allowed to bloom, especially along the roadside. Once you learn to recognize the cluster of 3/4 to 1-inch flower heads, it becomes a challenge to search for more survivors.

Whether the aster has blue or purplish-blue ray flowers, it will have yellow disk (center) flowers. Some plants seem to have more tightly-clustered flowers than others, so specific identification might be more involved. The alternate and clasping leaves help with the plant identification, but the scientific name is the key; i.e, 'oblongifolius'. Mature leaves are 2.5" long by only 5/8" wide.

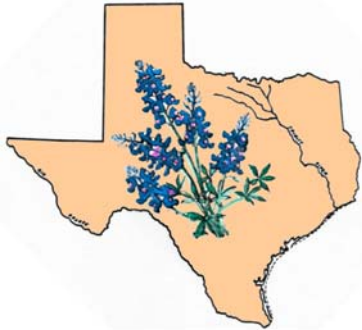
Denton is fortunate to have native plant-minded horticulturists involved in the city's landscaping plans and, thus, incorporating this low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plant into the city's medians. This rhizomatous perennial, planted in our local medians or in your butterfly garden, is truly an asset to the environment while providing late-season nectar for butterflies, plus, it's a show-stopper of beauty in the fall. Continue enjoying our glorious yellow native wildflowers, but don't miss the blue aster.

*Dorothy is a past president of Trinity Forks Chapter and a Texas Master Naturalist.*



*Photo by Dorothy Thetford*

Native Plant Society of Texas  
Trinity Forks Chapter  
P.O. Box 425491  
Denton, Texas 76204



*Sweetgum in Autumn splendor by Mike Mizell*

October 2011

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### Trinity Forks Contact Information

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**Programs** - **OPEN (need a volunteer)**  
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**NICE! Coordinators:**  
Kathy Saucier, 972-492-4680  
Marilyn Blanton, 940-464-7775(H)

**Website:** [www.npsot.org/TrinityForks](http://www.npsot.org/TrinityForks)

### Membership Corner

We give a big 'Thank You' to all these folks who became new or renewed members in Trinity Forks in the past month and hope to see you at the next meeting. You are what makes Trinity Forks special!

Ed Ellis, Denton  
Julie Kidd, Carrollton  
Jimmy Hoefert, Flower Mound  
Joanne Fell, Flower Mound  
Smiddy Foreman, Lewisville  
Lynn Hagler, Denton

*Trinity Forks Chapter of NPSOT meets on the fourth Thursday of January through May and September and October. Sign-in, social time with refreshments, educational displays, etc. start at 6:30 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Administration & Clock Tower (ACT) building at Texas Woman's University in Denton. ACT is located at Oakland Ave. & Administration Drive. The program begins at 7:00pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.*

*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.*