

Native Plant Society of Texas



Promote the conservation, research, and utilization of native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach, and example.

<http://www.npsot.org/Tyler/>

September 2010 Newsletter

Next Chapter Meeting

Monday
September 6th @ 7:00 PM
Tyler Nature Center
11942 FM 848
Tyler, TX

5:00 Dinner at Posados, 6:30 Workshop at Nature Center, 7:00 Meeting at Nature Center

Directions: In Tyler take Loop 323 to SH 248 (southeast of Tyler). Go east on SH 248 past the UT Tyler Campus to FM 848 (about 3 miles). Turn right on FM 848 and travel 0.7 mile. The Nature Center is on the right.

President's Message

Happy late summer, everyone. All those 100+ days seem to have shut down most of the wildflowers. The garden flowers from Mexico seem to have weathered the heat the best—zinnias and cosmos, and my favorite Yellow Bells or Esperanza (Hope in Spanish) that we have seen growing wild in Big Bend. My Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*) has just started to bloom.

I hope some of you are planning to go to the Symposium in October. You will have to register on line—either on your computer or someone else's. Look at all the things being offered, and if you know of a business that might be interested, let them know. There will be a silent auction

for scholarships, so if you would like to donate something for that, bring it to the meeting or the one in October. There will also be a dried flower arrangement contest that I would like to enter, but I need a "vase from a thrift shop or something that has been recycled" or some sort of natural material that could be used as a base. Also any dried materials that would go with the dried Black-eyed Susans that I have. Any ideas?

The Tyler Master Gardeners Fall Conference/Bulb Sale will be the same Saturday (October 9) as the Symposium (again) so we will need somebody to take our packaged seeds and supplies and man the table. I can bring everything to the October meeting. Greg Grant will be the featured speaker, and doors open at 8:00, with the meeting beginning at 9:00. The bulb sale starts at 11:30, and we don't usually stay for all of that. It's free, too, since no lunch is offered.

Cassandra Loos passed away last week. Her husband, Peter, has given several programs to our chapter, and has been an officer, in one position or another, in the State Society for years. And Cassandra was with him at all of the State meetings. She was so good at keeping track of the little things mentioned, and remembering how things have been done in the past. We will miss her.

Remember to bring any seeds that you have so we can package them at the meeting. We will meet at Posados (inside the Loop on 5th St.) for dinner again at 5:00 and have a workshop at 6:30 at the Nature Center. See you then.

Ruth Loper
President, Tyler Chapter, NPSOT

10 Ways to Go Green

Ron and I visited the Florida State Native Plant Conference in May and were given a tote bag from the City of Tallahassee. It was decorated with some good ideas:

Bring your own bag.

Install compact fluorescent lights.

Set your thermostat to 68 degrees or lower in the winter and 78 degrees or higher in the summer.

Wash clothes in cold water.

Use eco-friendly cleaning products.

Compost food and yard waste.

Turn off and unplug televisions, computers, chargers and other appliances when you are not using them.

Recycle glass, paper, plastic, rechargeable batteries and metals.

Bike, bus or carpool to work (or anywhere else).

Teach your family and friends how to live green.

Field Trips

Sonia Hill & Fran McKinney

Announcements

September 11, Texas Conservation Alliance 2010 Annual Meeting, Harvy Hall;

Oct. 2: SFA Plant Sale;

Oct. 9 Fall Garden Conference/Bulb Sale, Harvy Hall

Caddo Wildflower Chapter NPSOT: meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are held in Atlanta at Horn Enterprises located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Texas Hwy. 77 and Texas Hwy. 43. (Just off U.S. 59 on the southwest side of Atlanta.) The old Texas National Guard armory sits diagonally across the same intersection on the southwest corner. The Atlanta ISD Junior High School is across the street.

Lake Country Chapter NPSOT: meets at 7:00 p.m. the first Tuesday at the Titus County AgriLife Extension building, 1708 Industrial Road (FM 1402), Mount Pleasant.

Four Corners Chapter NPSOT: meets at 7:00 p.m. the first Thursday at Williams Memorial United Methodist Church parlor, 4000 Moores Lane, Texarkana.

Northeast Texas Organic Gardeners: meets at 10:00 a.m. the 1st Wednesday at Wildwood Eco-Farm in Kilgore. For directions call Carole Ramke at 903-986-9475

Cypress Basin Chapter Texas Master Naturalist: meets at 6:30 p.m. the 3rd Tuesday most months. For information on location email the president, Ted Barrow, @ barrowted@hotmail.com

Lawn-care commentary

A dialog contributed by Fran McKinney

GOD:

Frank, you know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no-maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long-lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colors by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles.

St. FRANCIS:

It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD:

Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colorful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees; only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD:

The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it-sometimes twice a week.

GOD:

They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS:

Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD:

They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS:

No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD:

Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS:

Yes, Sir.

GOD:

These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the

heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS:

You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it.

GOD:

What nonsense. At least they kept some of the trees. That was a sheer stroke of genius, if I do say so myself. The trees grow leaves in the spring to provide beauty and shade in the summer. In the autumn, they fall to the ground and form a natural blanket to keep moisture in the soil and protect the trees and bushes. It's a natural cycle of life.

ST. FRANCIS:

You better sit down, Lord. The Suburbanites have drawn a new circle. As soon as the leaves fall, they rake them into great piles and pay to have them hauled away.

GOD:

No!? What do they do to protect the shrub and tree roots in the winter to keep the soil moist and loose?

ST. FRANCIS:

After throwing away the leaves, they go out and buy something which they call mulch. They haul it home and spread it around in place of the leaves.

GOD:

And where do they get this mulch?

ST. FRANCIS:

They cut down trees and grind them up to make the mulch.

GOD:

Enough! I don't want to think about this anymore. St. Catherine, you're in charge of the arts. What movie have you scheduled for us tonight?

ST. CATHERINE:

'Dumb and Dumber'