



summer 1984  
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## The LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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### A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Since our inception as a society, I have studied case histories of similar organizations in an effort to avoid pitfalls and accentuate performance.

In almost every instance in my studies I found that the life blood of the group was the newsletter, and that the most important people in terms of success were the scribes and editors.

As a wildflower fanatic, I am well aware that it is far more enjoyable to seek, smell, and grow them than to write about them. We prefer to attend our meetings and field trips with glee, yet we are lax in sharing our experiences with our editor so that he may keep others posted as to our activities.

Be you scribe, scribbler, or reporter, please send as much correspondence as possible to our editor and let him worry whether it is newsworthy or not.

Another reminder - bring your binoculars and a small hand magnifying glass to the state meeting and field trip. Birding always goes well with wildflowers.

Sincerely,

*Richard L. Johnson*

Richard L. Johnson  
President, LNPS.



LNPS STATE MEETING AUGUST 18th!!!!!!

Our next state meeting will be held August 18, 1984. We will meet at Long Leaf Vista, Kisatchie National Forest. The first tour begins at 8:30 AM, the second at 9:30 AM. There will be a sack lunch and meeting to follow at Long Leaf Vista. Do plan to attend. This is a unique area of the state and we will have a chance to see some rare plants and the habitat they require to survive.

Tours shall be led by botanists and naturalists familiar with the Kisatchie Wilderness Area.

Maps and a reminder will be mailed out in early August. See you there!

DEADLINE FOR FALL NEWSLETTER!!!!

All articles, information, etc. to be included in the fall newsletter must be received by me no later than September 30, 1984. As you can tell from this newsletter, very little if any chapter news was included because it was not received! Send all correspondence to the following address:

David Heikamp  
717 Giuffrias  
Metairie, Louisiana 70001

DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES!!!!

In case you haven't paid your dues yet, dues are \$5 per year, and can be sent to our treasurer at the following address:

Mrs. Elinor Herd  
239 Pomeroy  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71115

RUSTON CHAPTER TO SPONSOR EXHIBIT

Chapter President Mrs. N. Gilmore informs us that the Ruston Chapter of the LNPS will sponsor a wildflower exhibit at the June 22nd Peach Festival to be held in Ruston. For more information, you can contact Mrs. Gilmore at Ph. 1-314-768-2881 after 6:00 PM.

GNO CHAPTER TO REVISIT CLARK'S CREEK IN SEPTEMBER

The GNO Chapter will visit the Clark's Creek area near Pond, Miss. this coming September 30th. We'll be leaving from our usual spot north of D.H. Holmes in the Lakeside Shopping Center at the corner of Causeway Blvd. and Veteran's Blvd. in Metairie. We'll leave at 6:30 AM, please be on time. This is part of the Tunica Hills, most unusual!



COCCINEUS IS NATIVE OF GEORGIA  
by Jack Price

Hibiscus coccineus has no common name as far as I can determine. The five petals of the flower are dark red and may be ten inches across and are typical of other members of the mallow family in design. The pistil extends through a hollow tube (stamen column) which is also dark red, pollen forms on the outside of the stamen column. The style extends a fraction of an inch above the column dividing into five stigmas. Hibiscus coccineus is a native of Georgia and Florida and is now found too in a native state in Louisiana.

Five light green sepals are found behind the five spreading petals and can be seen between the petals. A slight yellow color is noted at the base of the column. The complete flower is red except for the yellow at the base of the column and the light green sepals; even the pollen is red.

Flowers open early in the cool of the morning and remain open most of the day. They are attached to the main trunk of the plant just above the leaf junction by a stem approximately three to four inches long. Leaves are just below the flower stems. There are three to five slick green leaves on each stem, they are about five inches long and three quarters of an inch wide, tapering to a point at the tip. Edges of the leaves are toothed and slightly lobed.

The main trunks of the plant are slick and vary in color from a dark green to a slight reddish bronze cast as the plant ages. Some trunks grow to a height of eight to ten feet. Red Hibiscus branches very readily with some branches spreading out two to three feet. Each branch will produce many flowers. Blooming season is mid summer until frost.

The seed pod forms a five-chambered burr which is about an inch and a quarter long and three quarters of an inch in diameter, resembling a young cotton boll. The pistil remains after the flower falls away if the bloom has been pollinated. The complete flower will fall leaving only the sepals if pollination has not taken place. Seed pods are very small and green at first. They grow throughout the year in size and in time (August) mature and turn brown. The pod splits open when seeds are mature. Seeds are reluctant to drop from the pod and may remain on the stem throughout the winter.

Red Hibiscus is easy to transplant, you will usually find seedlings in areas with mature plants. You can gather the seeds and scatter in an area where there is plenty of sun and water. They do well in low, damp soil, but not in an area where water stands. It will take two to three years for your plants to bloom when grown from seed.

PLANTSEARCH

The following request was received recently: "I note via the Texas Wildflower Newsletter that Louisiana now has a native plant society. Does anyone know where to collect seed of Buffalo Clover (Trifolium reflexum)? This native is about out of existence, and is of enough value to bring into production." Anyone that can help, please write to:

Southwestern Seed Service Laboratory  
c/o Mr. R.C. Mauldin  
701 South Old Robinson Road  
Waco, Texas 76706



NATIVES IN THE NEW ORLEANS AREA  
by David Heikamp

This past year or two I have had the opportunity to grow several uncommon native wildflowers in my Metairie garden, and would like to pass on to you how they fared.

On one of our field trips last year, we came across the rare Schizandra coccinea, a vine belonging to the Magnolia Family. It looks very much like our native Climbing Hydrangea, except the leaves are alternately arranged, instead of opposite as on the Climbing Hydrangea.

Sometimes cultivated in Florida where its leaves are used to brew a hot tea, I questioned whether it would grow in the New Orleans area, as it normally grows with species of more northern distribution, such as the Northern Maidenhair Fern (A. pedatum). Well, after one year it is growing very well indeed, and with the help of a little fertilizer, has leaves almost twice as large as any we saw on our trip! Planted on the north side of my house, let's see how it does in the future.

Have you ever purchased Trilliums thru the mail only to have them die before ever blooming? Louisiana has four species of Trilliums it can call native, and three of them will thrive in the New Orleans area. The fourth, Trillium recurvatum, reaches Louisiana in the southernmost part of its range, and won't grow here. Trillium foetidissimum occurs in the Tunica Hills area, and while the flowers do have an awful smell, it deserves a spot in every wildflower garden with its attractively mottled leaves and blood red flowers (rarely yellow). Trillium gracile occurs in central and western La. in areas that look all the world like the Tunica Hills. It is smaller in all its parts, giving it a more graceful appearance. It otherwise looks much like T. foetidissimum, but is the last species in the state to flower each year. Trillium ludovicianum has its range just south of T. gracile's. From the few specimens I've seen, it is the largest Louisiana Trillium. It too does well in the New Orleans area, and is our only species not to occur in a yellow flowering form.

Clematis glaucophylla is a rare Clematis that occurs in a few scattered spots over the southeastern states into Oklahoma. Last year I collected a couple of plants in eastern Mississippi. It is supposed to most closely resemble Clematis versicolor, another glaucous-leaved species, but I find it is closer to Clematis texensis. Flowers are a bit larger than C. texensis, and are a slightly duller red color, with the undersides of the upturned sepals whitish. It is normally found in a sandy slightly acid soil, and here in my garden it is one of the more robust species I've grown, far outdoing both C. texensis and the much smaller flowered C. versicolor.

I hope the above information will be of some use to those attempting to grow and propagate native plants, and will hopefully encourage others to send in accounts of their experiences, good or bad, for publication in future issues.



HELP SAVE THE WILDFLOWERS  
by Karlene DeFatta

Ed. Note: One look at the June issue of Southern Living magazine (the ad for Texas that follows page 26) and you will soon realize what can be done, and what a sad shape Louisiana's wildflower heritage is in.....

The North Highland Garden Club sponsored a three day wildflower program. It was an outstanding event, and I really enjoyed it. I listened with great interest how the state of Texas saves millions of dollars each year by never using herbicides and by restricting mowing to a very few times per year. Their highway department and public are educated on this subject. Texas is known for its scenic highways, a tourist attraction as priceless as it is beautiful, and one the state of Texas goes all out to advertise.

As a Louisianian, it is embarrassing to realize that we are known for the filthiest and ugliest roads in the nation. So much of our native beauty has been struck down by herbicides, mowed down by incessant mowing, or buried under tons of roadside debris, that there is little left for us to look upon and say yes, this is my state, and I am proud to be a part of it!

What can be done? We need tougher litter laws, and far more importantly, we need a Department of Transportation with a firm commitment to preserving our roadsides in a natural state: do away with the herbicides and mow only minimally, as has been done in Texas. It is incredible to me, to sit at a meeting such as that sponsored by North Highland Garden Club, or OPERATION WILDFLOWER, put on by the Lafayette Natural History Museum, hear Mr. Neimann of the Texas State Dept. of Highways and Public Transportation explain how the program works in our neighboring state of Texas, hear Dr. Dale Thomas, professor of botany at Northeast State University at Monroe, La. tell how herbicides have virtually wiped out our roadside flora, hear Paul Hardy, Secretary of the Louisiana Dept. of Transportation tell us what a tremendous amount of support his department is willing to offer such a program: even to broadcasting seeds donated to the dept. along our highways, AND THEN hear Mr. O.M. Pourciau, Roadside Development Superintendent, D.O.T., State of La. tell us what a wonderful thing herbicides are, and how one can never mow often enough, and how nothing ever grows for him, but he'll still see to it that all donated seeds are used, and how he cannot tell the difference between what we call wildflowers and he calls weeds!

Certainly, someone here has missed the proverbial boat!

—————HEARD IT THRU THE GRAPEVINE—————

Rumor has it that several New Orleans area naturalists are planning a lobbying group to lobby in Baton Rouge against the use of herbicides on Louisiana roadsides. As more on this develops, the information will be passed along to you.



## NEWS ON BOOKS.....

If you recently received a price list on the volumes of the Rickett series entitled "WILD FLOWERS OF THE UNITED STATES", it is already outdated. I ordered the Northwestern States (Vol. 5) as soon as I got the list, only to receive a letter several weeks later stating that the price had already been changed from \$74 to \$88.50.

A new book, "THE VASCULAR FLORA OF THE LITTLE THICKET NATURE SANCTUARY, SAN JACINTO COUNTY, TEXAS" is now available by sending \$7.50 to L.T.N.S. Flora Book, Outdoor Nature Club, P.O. Box 101, 4141 South Braeswood, Houston, Texas 77025. Price includes postage & handling, and the book is 163+ pgs.

"DESERT PLANTS", a really fine quarterly magazine, is published for the Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum at Superior, Arizona by the University of Arizona. Subscription rate is \$12/yr. Send to Friends of the Arboretum, P.O. Box 3607, College Station, Tuscon, Az. 85722.

## SEED EXCHANGE CHAIRMAN VOLUNTEERS

Well, we now have a seed exchange chairman, so go get those seeds! Mr. John Larkin Sr., 1907 Metairie Ct., Metairie, La. 70001, has volunteered his services as our seed exchange chairman for the 1984/85 season. The more people that participate, the greater will be our success. Now is a good time to start. Pay attention as to where various wildflowers are blooming, and keep notes as to where they are. If you can somehow mark the spot, or tag the plant with a weather-resistant tag, so much the better. Even in a big city there are many opportunities to collect seed. Some of your neighbors may have native trees, shrubs, etc. growing in their yards, and be willing to share some with you.

When to go and collect the seeds depends on both the plant involved and the weather that particular year. As a general rule though, annuals will mature their seeds faster than perennials. If the plant is an annual, you can take the whole plant. If it is a perennial, cut off the portion of the plant with the seeds, being careful not to disturb the rest of the plant. In any case, never take all the seeds of a particular species from a given area. Always see to it that enough is left to continue the species in that spot.

Put the seeds in paper bags, label carefully as to the date collected species (or a good description of the plant), your name for future reference, and where it was collected. When you get home, store the seeds in a cool, dry place. It is generally not necessary to refrigerate them, and in no case store them in a sealed container or plastic bag, as they will mold. Clean the seeds as much as possible. A regular sieve from the kitchen is very good for this.

Finally, send the seeds you collect to our seed exchange chairman, Mr. Larkin, at the above address!