



SPRING 1988

volume 6, number 1

## The LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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### A LETTER FROM PAST-PRESIDENT DIANE BULLARD

I would like to thank everyone who assisted me during my two years as President of the Louisiana Native Plant Society. I am anxious to have the Society expand in its reach and influence and look forward to working with our new officers. I am optimistic about the future of Louisiana's natural environment and I have hope that this optimism is contagious and will spur others to work toward the goals of the Society and other projects with similar goals. Don't wait to enjoy the beautiful, critical ecosystems of our state. Include field trips in your plans for 1988 and offer your help with programs and meetings. It will be time well spent for yourself and our precious environment.

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to thank those who have sent in articles for the Spring Newsletter, especially Diane Bullard, Beth Erwin, Annette Parker, and James Culpepper. Hopefully, we'll hear more from them in the future, as well as from other LNPS members!

### JANUARY '88 MEETING NEWS

The LNPS met January 23, 1988 at LSU-Alexandria for the annual winter meeting. President Diane Bullard called the meeting to order. Treasurer Bill Gebelein gave the financial report. Secretary Beth Erwin read the minutes of the previous meeting. Both reports were approved as read.

Chapter reports were as follows:

Northwest Chapter - had sponsored an educational seminar at Hodges Gardens. They plan to send a member to the Landscaping With Native Plants Conference in North Carolina in the Summer of 1988.

Acadiana Chapter - still producing a newsletter. Has held a reorganizational meeting in fall of 1987.

Old business was as follows:

Nellwyn Gilmore reported on the Natural Heritage Program. She stated that the bog at Red Dirt WMR was getting too much attention and needed something done to direct traffic flow. Richard Johnson suggested that 4 or 5 people form a committee to evaluate the damage done, research the options, costs, and environmental impact of permanent pathways.

Nellwyn asked for volunteers to check the various herbaria around the state for information on plants as she requested it.

Bill Gebelein asked that a membership list and set of bylaws be sent to each member. The motion was made to add a membership list to the summer newsletter. The motion was seconded and approved by all present. (Ed. Note: this was recently mailed out in a separate mailing.)

New business was as follows:

Richard Johnson presented the nominating committee's choices for officers and board members. They were approved by all present:

President:	Ed Leuck
Vice-President:	Terry Erwin
Secretary:	Annette Parker
Treasurer:	Elinor Herd

Board Members (3-year terms):

Augustine Breaux  
Bill Fontenot  
Joan Moncrief

The summer meeting was tentatively set for the first weekend in June in the West-Central area of the state. Charles Allen and Annette Parker are in charge of the details.

An announcement was made about a plan to establish a prairie ecosystem in the town of Eunice.

Cathy Hall presented the part that Hodges Gardens would play in the project to establish native gardens there. The part that LNPS members were to play was outlined then. John Mayronne is to develop the plan, using information gathered from members, and offers to donate plants.

Motion to adjourn was seconded and approved.

#### HODGES GARDENS UPDATE

by Diane Bullard

The LNPS is working with Hodges Gardens to establish a native plant and wildflower display garden. At the annual meeting in January, it was decided to have member John Mayronne work up a landscape plan for the area. He has asked LNPS members to submit to him a listing of plants they could donate to the garden planting or make any suggestions in regards to species selection, etc.

This is an important project for the Society, so please help in whatever capacity you can. At the summer meeting, we will discuss work days at the gardens to prepare the area for planting and maintenance. John can be reached at:

John Mayronne  
P.O. Box 2355  
Covington, Louisiana 70434  
Phone (504) 892-5424

#### DON'T FORGET YOUR DUES ARE DUE!

The 1988 LNPS dues are due! So, if you haven't renewed your dues, or know someone who hasn't, the place to send your \$5 is:

Elinor Herd  
239 Pomeroy  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71115

DEADLINES FOR NEXT 4 NEWSLETTERS:

Don't forget! In an effort to better coordinate the distribution of information concerning field trips as well as other dated information the newsletter is following the new deadline policy. The deadlines for the next four newsletters will be as follows:

Summer Newsletter:	June 1, 1988
Fall Newsletter:	September 1, 1988
Winter Newsletter:	December 1, 1988
Spring Newsletter:	March 1, 1989

Every effort will be made to have the newsletters in the mail within 7 days following the deadline. Your editor's address is:

David Heikamp  
717 Giuffrias  
Metairie, La. 70001

ACADIANA CHAPTER NEWS

LNPS members are invited to join the Acadiana Chapter on any of the field trip they've scheduled. Call Bill Fontenot at the Nature Station (Ph. 235-6181) if you plan on attending one:

For March 26 and 27th, a trip to the woodlands surrounding the camp of LNPS members Virginia and Gilbert Cook. The area is magnificent, so don't miss it. You can spend the night at the camp or head on home late in the day Saturday. Wear walking shoes and bring lunches, cameras, etc. You must provide your own transportation or car pool.

Another field trip is planned for April 30th to the Caroline Dorman Nature Preserve.

Yet another field trip is planned for May 28th to the area around Polluck, Louisiana which is in the Kisatchie National Forest.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO BETH ERWIN

LNPS Secretary Beth Erwin would like to hear from anyone that has questions or has developed propagation techniques for various species. Write Beth, and your question/answer or information will be in the next newsletter. Her address is:

Beth Erwin  
520 Fairview  
Bastrop, Louisiana 71220

SEED CHAIRMAN HAS NEW ADDRESS

Annette Parker, our Seed Exchange Chairman, has a new address (see below). Annette writes, "Members are urged to collect wildflower seeds for the native gardens to be established at Hodges Gardens. Seeds of sun and shade-loving

species are needed. These will be planted by society members in designated areas within Hodges Gardens. Volunteers are needed to assist in the process. Donated plants are also being solicited. John Mayronne can be contacted for more information. As for the seed exchange, most seeds currently held by the society are several years old and their viability is questionable. These can be obtained in quantity, free of charge. Send \$1.00 to cover postage and specify whether you want a wildflower mixture or separate packets labeled by species. The mixture would be a good addition to a pre-existing garden.'

'Fresh seeds are also available. These are listed below and can be obtained for 25 cents per packet (50 cents minimum):"

Echinacea purpurea  
Echinacea pallida  
Gaillardia pulchella  
Ipomopsis rubra  
Verbena tenuisecta  
Lobelia cardinalis  
Ipomea quamoclit

Asclepias tuberosa  
Asclepias sp.  
Helianthus hirsutus  
Coreopsis tinctoria  
Monarda punctata  
plus a few others, just ask!

Annette Parker  
Rt. 1, Box 332  
Anacoco, Louisiana 71403

#### WILDFLOWER'S LEAVES SNAP SHUT WHEN DISTURBED

by Jack Price

(Ed. Note: The following article appeared in the Shreveport Times and is reprinted with their permission.)

Almost everyone in this area is familiar with the Rose Sensitive Briar or Shame Plant ( Mimosa strigillosa ) with its sharp spines, beautiful green foliage and round rose pink balls tipped with gold. But there is another Sensitive Plant ( Neptunia lutea ) which resembles the Rose Sensitive Briar but does not have the sharp spikes.

Dark yellow in color, the Yellow Sensitive Plant or Yellow Puff is a perennial with long stems (six to eight of them) coming from the root system. Stems lay flat on the ground and may extend outward for six to seven feet; they are light brown in color, about 1/16 of an inch thick and very brittle. The stems die back after the first frost.

Both plants are members of the legume family and the foliage is very similar. Leaves alternate up the stem. A leaf stem is approximately two to three inches long with opposite dark green leaflets about 1/4 of an inch long and 1/16 of an inch wide. Leaflets crowd one another along the stem.

The leaflets snap together (close) when touched or disturbed as if something mechanical closes them. The touch of a finger, an insect, or a light breeze will cause the leaves to close.

Flowers are on one to two inch leafless stems located at the leaf junctions. Blooms are first noticed as small green balls which mature rapidly. Flower heads are almost oblong except for a small flat spot on the end. Several hundred small flowers form the one-inch head; only the flowers at the top contain the pistils and stamens. Flowers shed when pollination has taken place; and a small flat bean develops. Only one or two flowers will pollinate on each flower head.

The bean curves slightly and when mature (about three inches long) will

split open revealing two, three, or as many as a dozen flat, light brown seeds.

Seeds are about 1/8 of an inch across and 1/16 of an inch thick. It may be years before the seeds germinate. Birds are very fond of the seeds. More leaves and flowers are added as the main stems grow in length. The older leaves and flowers mature as the newer ones develop.

Yellow Sensitive Plant is a desirable ornamental for your garden, but it is almost impossible to transplant. The root system is very deep and massive; and if any of the roots are cut or damaged, the plant seldom recovers. Seed culture is a long and trying process; as seedlings take several years to establish and flower.

### GROUP TO WEED OUT MISINFORMATION

by Annette Parker

The U.S. National Arboretum is attempting to correct the mistakes, omissions, and inadequacies of information found in gardening books and plant reference guides. One area in which much incomplete or erroneous information has been published is that of plant hardiness. The Arboretum wants to enlist the help of sixty thousand observers in gathering new information. Two thousand species and cultivars are being evaluated. If you have grown a number of woody or herbaceous plants and would like to become an official observer, write to:

Plant Performance Guide  
U.S. National Arboretum  
3501 New York Avenue N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002

### LOUISIANA PROJECT WILDFLOWER UPDATE

Louisiana Project Wildflower will hold its first annual meeting on Friday, May 6, 1988 at the Lafayette Municipal Auditorium in Lafayette, La. Included in the program will be Annie Paulson from the National Wildflower Research Center, Charles Fryling from the Texas Department of Highways, and Randalle More (wildflowers in landscape design). There will also be presentations by communities that have initiated wildflower plantings as well as sessions on wildflower gardening, planting, maintenance, and fund-raising. For more information write to:

Louisiana Project Wildflower  
637 Girard Park Drive  
Lafayette, Louisiana 70503

### GROWING WILDFLOWERS

by Beth Erwin

As I always say, nothing is more rewarding than success with seeds. On the other hand, nothing is more frustrating than failure with seeds, especially expensive ones. Terry and I have spent the last three weekends transplanting moss verbena, gaillardia, tickseed coreopsis, and inland sea

oats seedlings and plants to wildflower plots. The seeds planted last fall have not come up and we felt a little insurance was in order. The transplants are doing very well. Hopefully, the seeds just haven't had enough warm weather yet.

Here in the yard everything is coming up! I guess I should explain our yard situation. Terry and I decided, after much discussion when we bought the house, that the front yard would be mine, and the back yard would be his. I am to leave the back yard alone, and he is to leave the front yard alone. Of course we sneak things in and out when the other one is not around. The side yards are the DMZ. We both want totally native landscapes. I didn't think Bastrop was ready for a prairie in the front of a small urban lot. I still don't.

So, with the help of a good and loyal LNPS friend, a new foundation plan was developed. Phase I consisted of the removal of a large water oak that had been pruned a la power company, plus an assortment of non-natives common to the discount store garden centers. In one six foot by twenty foot bed there was a virtual arboretum. There was one each of golden euonymus, gold spot euonymus, green euonymus, silver queen euonymus, Japanese boxwood, Harland's boxwood, four large azaleas (each of a different color), bearded iris, and monkey grass. The bed now contains dwarf yaupon, dwarf wax myrtle, Georgia calamint, gaillardia, coreopsis, and the occasional sprig of monkey grass. Plants used elsewhere in the front for screening purposes include wax myrtles and river birches. Installing the native shrubs was Phase II, now I'm developing the flower beds. Plants that joined us last year were received as gifts or collected from the industrial park, future softball complex or recently annihilated airport area. They are being lifted, divided, and replanted. I am working feverishly at this knowing that one morning in March spring will be here, and then summer that afternoon! To date, I've divided Penstemon, Obedient Plant, Coreopsis, Monarda, Liatris, and Prunella. I make it a point, and you should too, to pot up some of the plants and give them to interested friends. Simply lift the clumps, shake loose the excess soil, rinse the soil gently from the roots, and carefully separate the plants. Replant immediately and water well over the next few days as well as when you plant. Liatris is divided by digging the bulbous corms and separating them with a sharp knife. Replant and water immediately.

Last fall I took a big step in removing some crape myrtles from the grounds around our church. They were victims of aphids, powdery mildew, drought, red clay, and the paper mill. They no longer bloomed, and just barely leafed out in the spring. I had planned to replace them with Ilex decidua, but could not locate any container-grown plants. LNPS nurserymen Bob Powers in North Monroe came through for me, bringing some plants back from a trip to Alabama. I am hoping that in years to come those hollies will create a demand for more. They'll be in a highly visible location and will certainly brighten an otherwise dismal winter landscape.

Finally, Dr. Thomas's new book, 100 Woods Plants of North Louisiana is ready. The illustrations are excellent, and it is easy to read. I especially like the notes on commercial use of each plant. This book would be an excellent resource for teachers and your local library, and at \$6.00 it is truly a bargain. I know all LNPS members will want a personal copy!

#### LNPS MEMBER UNEARTHS LIST OF LOUISIANA SHRUBS

LNPS member James Culpepper of Baton Rouge recently sent in a copy of an article by botanist R.S. Cocks that originally appeared in Volume III (1922) of the Journal of the Arnold Arboretum. Dr. Cocks was a botanist at Tulane

University in New Orleans at the time, and the article is entitled "A List of the Shrubs of Louisiana." The information contained in the article was based on 16 years of collecting the author did here in Louisiana. Dr. Cocks mentions that a previous article (April, 1921) appeared in the Journal and covered the trees of Louisiana. The shrub article is very interesting, and presumably, both should be available through your local library's search service.

### BACK YARD DISCOVERY

by Annette Parker

We purchased a home last fall with a mostly wooded yard and a small, fairly natural bottomland area. I have eagerly searched for "botanical wonders" on my property since that time. The previous owners had no interest in plants and practiced "bush hogging" and burning as gardening techniques.

I wondered if I would find anything exciting. Did I ever! On February 27, I discovered a colony of the Southern Twayblade Orchid, Listera australis in an open area beneath water oak and sweetgum. Several were in full flower while others had just emerged. They are in an area about 60 feet behind the house that has received light trampling, as well as mowing and trampling. A smaller population was found elsewhere in the yard. Although not truly rare, this plant is always an exciting find, particularly in one's back yard! Does anyone believe me?

### INFORMATION SOUGHT FOR WILDFLOWER ATLAS

Laura Martin of Atlanta, Georgia is researching a book called The Wildflower Atlas, and hopes to give information about wildflowers for every state. Anyone interested in supplying Laura with information on Louisiana wildflowers can write her at:

Laura C. Martin  
616 Starlight Dr. N.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30342

### MAIL ORDER COMPANY RECOMMENDED

by Annette Parker

Last fall I placed a small order with "Natural Gardens" and was pleased with the plants I received. They handle mainly natives and some traditional garden perennials. Their plants are small, but so are their prices! Each is \$1.50 postpaid, and seed packets are 75 cents. Minimum plant order is \$7.50. Their offerings include asters, goldenrods, Cardinal Flower, and a few shrubs. Their catalog is free and their address is:

Natural Gardens  
113 Jasper Lane  
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830