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NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1990

volume 8, number 3

DUES REMINDER

Do you know anyone who would like to join the LNPS? Tell them to send their dues (\$5) to our Treasurer:

Mary Moseley
122 Justin
Shreveport, Louisiana 71105

DEADLINES FOR NEXT 4 NEWSLETTERS:

Deadlines for the next four newsletters are as follows:

Winter Newsletter:	December 1, 1990
Spring Newsletter:	March 1, 1991
Summer Newsletter:	June 1, 1991
Fall Newsletter:	September 1, 1991

EASTERN NATIVE PLANT ALLIANCE MEETING

by John Mayronne

It was a great honor to represent the Louisiana Native Plant Society at this year's meeting of the Eastern Native Plant Alliance. Many organizations were represented and I feel that we accomplished a great deal during our short stay. The participants were very knowledgeable and dedicated toward a mutual goal that will benefit all. Below is the E.N.P.A. statement of purpose and a brief summary of this year's meeting. Anyone interested in more information should contact me at Natives (504) 892-5424.

The Eastern Native Plant Alliance is an association of organizations that promote and demonstrate native plant conservation in the eastern United States and southeastern Canada. Its purpose is to provide a network for exchanging ideas and defining issues, and to facilitate cooperative action. As for the meeting itself:

Steven Foster, author of "Peterson's Field Guide: Eastern/Central Medicinal Plants", discussed the need to determine the amount of collection on native medicinal plants in the United States. He stated that species should be targeted for this study and that at present only estimated totals of 140 species can be determined from tonnage sales by large U.S. dealers. With the recent increased interest in this subject, he feels that monitoring and

propagation of these populations are the only way to insure their continued existence. We are only now realizing the full extent of the medicinal values of many of our native plants. Therefore, we must have a conservation ethic in dealing with species of limited populations.

Ken Landes, a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Forestry Service, discussed on-going research concerning the clear-cutting of forests. He indicated that small group cuttings is the most ecologically sound practice, reducing erosion and impact to plant and animal communities, while encouraging a diversity in succession levels. Studies performed in Indiana and Ohio tried to identify and recreate ecological habitats. They identified areas to be left to develop into old stand timber. Much of his research was done in order to identify, monitor, and manage plant communities. Their approach was very sensitive and could be used as a model in our national forests. Ken suggested that our native plant society contact the U.S. Forestry Service in our area and ask to see their management plans. He anticipated that they would be glad to have our input and that we could benefit by having more native plant communities to interact with as field trip sites or possible repository sites in the event that a plant rescue effort would be realized. Any feedback on this would be appreciated.

Barbara Pryor with the New England Wildflower Society addressed the subject of E.N.P.A. as a clearinghouse of information dealing with plant conservation matters. Along with this topic we discussed the organization of our directory and newsletter as an effort to help organizations network with one another to solve problems they might be experiencing.

Faith Campbell with the National Resources Defense Council discussed the importance of individuals and organizations in lobbying for their causes. She stated that two of the major problems are motivation and timeliness (knowing when these issues are due for discussion). With a group effort, an organization can make politicians take notice on important issues and represent the views of their constituency. It is crucial to be informed on the issues so that everyone is aware of their implications and can make impartial evaluations. For example, a vote on the Endangered Species Act is coming up soon. Each of you is important in trying to get this legislation passed. Please consider writing your federal legislators on this matter as the time nears. I will try to notify you, and Ms. Campbell has offered to provide us with more information.

Three new issues were addressed: 1) The pine straw raking industry: preliminary research indicates that the commercial collection of pine needles on an annual basis destroys plant materials in the upper soil layers (herb layers) as well as the woody species that are typically being controlled by herbicides. Possibly we could get Nelwyn Gilmore to speak on this research at our annual meeting. 2) Invasive exotic species: a paper proposing action to deal with this matter will be prepared by someone in the E.N.P.A. group. It will address the concerns of dealing with species that are allowed to enter the United States and could suggest possible means of dealing with those already in our country. Invasive exotic species tend to choke out our native species through habitat competition. Examples include Loosestrife, Privet, and others. 3) Deer management: many animal populations with no predators as well as reduced habitat are proving very detrimental to some native plant species. This matter needs to be evaluated to see if there is a solution to this problem.

Ed Clebsch informed the group that the Tennessee Department of Transportation plans to have a symposium on roadside management and beautification emphasizing native plants and conservation within the next year. All southeastern states will be asked to participate with the hope of developing a dialogue as well as cooperation between the states.

WANTED: T-SHIRT SUGGESTIONS

John Mayronne of Natives Nurseries would like plant suggestions and/or designs for our 1991 t-shirts. These will be voted on at our January meeting. Please send your suggestions/designs to:

John Mayronne
P.O. Box 2355
Covington, La. 70434

THE BLAZING STARS (LIATRIS) OF THE CAJUN PRAIRIE

by Charles Allen & Malcolm Vidrine

Blazing Stars (Liatris) are in the sunflower family (Asteraceae) and are a conspicuous and important part of the Cajun Prairie wildflower scene. They are also called Gay Feathers, Button Snakeroot, and Rattlesnake Masters. The flowers of Blazing Stars are produced in heads and the heads are arranged in spikes at the tips of the plant. The first flowers to open are at the tip of the spikes and flowering continues downward. Blazing Star flowers vary from light blue to blue or purple or red. All species of Liatris are perennials and produce black corms underground. We have propagated Blazing Stars with stem cuttings. There are five species of Liatris (Liatris acidota , Liatris elegans , Liatris pycnostachya , Liatris spicata , and Liatris squarrosa) in the Cajun Prairie. White-flowered forms are known for the first four species listed; however, these are rare especially in Liatris acidota , Liatris pycnostachya , and Liatris spicata .

Liatris acidota (Sharp or Slender Blazing Star) flowers from early June to early October. The heads of this species are the smallest on the prairie and the spikes are the narrowest. The leaves are narrow and grass-like and the plant is usually two to four feet tall.

Liatris elegans (Pinkscale Blazing Star) is the last Blazing Star to stop flowering and has been noted in flower from mid-August to late November. The flowers of Liatris elegans are usually light blue and the leaves are wider than Liatris acidota . The plants are generally one to two feet tall.

Liatris pycnostachya (Prairie or Kansas Blazing Star) and Liatris spicata (Dense Blazing Star) are very similar. Both produce more conspicuous spikes of flowers than the other species - two to six feet tall. Some of the spikes on these plants may be three feet long. Both have fairly wide leaves. Liatris spicata flowers from late July to late August and Liatris pycnostachya from mid-August to late October. The axis of the spikes of Liatris pycnostachya is pubescent while in Liatris spicata it is glabrous. There are a large number of plants in the Cajun Prairie that show characteristics that are intermediate between these two, making their positive identification difficult.

Liatris squarrosa (Button or Scaly Blazing Star) is different from the other species of Liatris in producing its flowers in larger heads and the heads are spaced further apart. Thus, this species does not produce the dense spike that is common to the other four species. The plants flower from late July to late November. The leaves are fairly wide and the plants are two to four feet tall.

CAJUN PRAIRIE FALL FLOWER FEST

The Cajun Prairie Fall Flower Fest will be held Saturday, October 13th and Sunday, October 14th, 1990. It is sponsored by the Cajun Prairie Habitat

Preservation Society, a nonprofit organization. A \$5 registration/donation fee is requested, all proceeds going to the Society. Plants, seeds, copies of articles of Cajun Prairie plants, t-shirts and videos will be available for purchase. The agenda is as follows:

Saturday, 10/13/90:

8:00 to 11:00 AM: tour the Eunice Cajun Prairie Restoration Site at the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and East Magnolia Avenue. This will include an informal workshop at 10:00 AM on plant identification.

9:00 AM: view the Cajun Prairie wildflower video in Room 112 of the Science Building on the LSUE campus. This video will be repeated at 11:00 AM.

11:00 AM to 1:00 PM: tour the LSUE Cajun Prairie Restoration Site and enjoy a picnic lunch (each person is responsible for his/her own lunch). The site is located at the LSUE pavillion on the west side of the campus.

All workshops listed below will be in Room 112 of the Science Building.

1:00 to 1:30 PM: workshop: Cajun Prairie plants as food, spice, and medicine.

1:45 to 2:15 PM: workshop: butterflies of the Cajun Prairie.

2:30 to 3:00 PM: workshop: fresh and dried arrangements using Cajun Prairie plants.

3:15 to 3:45 PM: workshop: propagation of Cajun Prairie plants.

4:00 to 4:30 PM: workshop: handfishing in the Cajun Prairie area.

6:00 to 8:00 PM: live Cajun Prairie music show at the Liberty theater.

Sunday, 10/14/90:

9:00 AM: meet at the Eunice Cajun Prairie Restoratin Site located at the corner of Martin Luther King Drive and East Magnolia Avenue. Each participant is responsible for his/her own transportation, food, water, etc.

For more information, contact: Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society
P.O. Box 172
Eunice, Louisiana 70535
or, call Malcolm Vidrine (318) 457-4497

PLANT ALERT

The "New Jersey Native Plant Society Newsletter" reports that Van Bourgondien and Sons, Inc. and Spring Hill Nurseries are continuing to sell Cypripedium acaule and Trillium grandiflorum as "nursery grown" and "not wild collected", implying that the plants are being propagated. There is every indication that these plants are not nursery grown, and are in fact wild collected. Both nurseries have been requested to stop the practice, by the Mailorder Association of Nurseries and others - to no avail. The Newsletter suggests you write to these nurseries, and to the Mailorder Association of Nurseries, requesting that they not use "nursery grown" and "not wild collected" in their catalogs. The addresses are:

K. Van Bourgondien and Sons, Inc.
Box A
Babylon, New York 11702

Spring Hill Nurseries
6523 N. Galena Road
Peoria, Illinois 61632

Mailorder Association of Nurseries
8683 Doves Fly Way
Laurel, Maryland 20707
Attention: Ms. Camille G. Chioini, Executive Director

OBSERVATIONS ON THE WILDFLOWER PLANTINGS ALONG U.S. 165
NORTH OF MONROE, LOUISIANA, 1990

by R. Dale Thomas

Several different kinds of wildflowers were planted along the highways around Monroe, Louisiana during the last two years. The most successful of these were along various stretches of U.S. 165 just north of Monroe. The first year there were several annuals but the only noticeable plants this year were Painted Coreopsis (Coreopsis tinctoria), Lance-leaf Coreopsis (Coreopsis lanceolata), Lemon Balm (Monarda citriodora), Mexican Hat (Ratibida pedunculata), and a * Indian Paintbrushes (Castilleja indivisa) and Indian Blankets (Gaillardia pulchella). These plants appeared to be competing well with other more-weedy plants and were in full flower when the state highway department mowed a large strip on each side of the plantings (most were in the median only). This initial mowing was on June 20, 1990 before the plants had set seed, thus destroying most of them before any seed were left for next year. Surprisingly, a lot of the Ratibida came back up and were in full flower when the department mowed the entire median on August 15 and 16, 1990. Since neither the north or south outside shoulders were mown, one cannot see any reason for their mowing the median.

IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN if we will have the cooperation of the Louisiana State Highway Department in preserving our native wildflowers or if they are engaging in a hollow publicity exercise. Their practice of herbiciding around Monroe has made almost all showy wildflowers either extinct or very rare along the roadsides. Apparently they consider the dull brown of dead vegetation to be more attractive than the yellows, whites, reds, etc., of our native flowering herbs.

One wonders just how many of our citizens would prefer for our roadbanks to be a stand of pure bermuda grass (an introduced species). We need to do a lot of educating of our fellow citizens and taxpayers. We could save millions of dollars by mowing the highways only in late fall after the herbaceous plants have mature seeds. More millions could be saved if the use of herbicides on railroad and highway right-of-ways was prohibited except where safety was involved (such as around signs and hard-to-see intersections).

THE NATIVE VIBURNUMS OF LOUISIANA

by Charles M. Allen

The genus Viburnum is in the Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle Family) and in Louisiana includes six species (Viburnum acerifolium , Viburnum cassinoides , Viburnum dentatum , Viburnum nudum , Viburnum prunifolium , and Viburnum acerifolium). Viburnum acerifolium is a small shrub and the other five species are large shrubs to small trees. All have opposite simple leaves and produce white flowers. The fruits are blue or black drupes that are important foods for birds and other game animals.

Viburnum dentatum L. is called Arrow-wood, Arrow-wood Viburnum, Mealytree, Withe-rod, or Withe-wood. Two varieties are recognized (var. dentatum and var. scabrellum (T. & G.) Chapm.). The latter variety is sometimes elevated to species rank and known as Viburnum ashei Bush. This species is a shrub with a maximum height of about 15 feet. The leaves are ovate-lanceolate with serrate or dentate (toothed) margins. The bark is gray to grayish-brown or reddish-brown. The young branches are usually straight and not tapered and thus Indians reportedly used them as arrow shafts. The flowers are produced June to August and the fruits are subglobose and bluish-black. It is a wide-ranging species in Louisiana and is common in upland woods and on recent alluvium in pine woods. Variety scabrellum is especially

common along Sabine Bayou in Natchitoches and Winn Parishes.

Viburnum acerifolium L. is called Mapleleaf Viburnum and is the smallest of our native viburnums. It has 3-lobed "maplelike" leaves. This small shrub has stems with a diameter usually of less than one-half inch and forms thickets by underground branching rhizomes. It flowers in April and June and produces ellipsoid, black fruits. It is found mainly in west-central to northwestern Louisiana. It is common under mixed-oak canopies and is especially common on the clay soils of Keiffer and other prairies.

Viburnum rufidulum Raf. is called Rusty Black Haw, Rusty Nanny-berry, Southern Nanny-berry, Southern Black Haw and Blue Haw. It is the largest of our viburnums and is reported to become a small tree to 40 feet tall. The leaves are elliptic to obovate or oval with finely serrate margins and red hairs along veins below. The bark is rough, the ridges are narrow and rounded and breaks into dark reddish-brown plates. The wood is hard, heavy, strong, and has an odor that is disagreeable to some people. The flowers are produced June to August and the fruit is bluish black and oblong to obovoid. It occurs throughout our upland woods but is most common in prairie sites along with nutmeg hickories and hackberries. It is usually absent from bottomland hardwood forests.

Viburnum prunifolium L. differs from Viburnum rufidulum Raf. in having no brown or reddish hairs on the lower leaf surfaces and in having grayish rather than reddish-brown buds. It has all the same common names but without the prefix of "Rusty", and is most commonly known as Black Haw. It is a more northern species than Viburnum rufidulum Raf. and is scattered throughout north central and northwestern Louisiana. Like Viburnum rufidulum Raf., the fruits are edible when completely ripe and have the taste and odor of prunes. They can both be used with citrus juice to make jelly but it also has a prune taste. The powdered bark of the stems or roots has been used as a medicine for uterine colic, general antispasmodic, astringent, tonic, uterine sedative, abortive, diuretic, and nervine. These two species are characteristic in having branches that are opposite on the stem and almost parallel to the ground. The leaves are very lustrous green and when planted in lawns, the plants branch profusely and form a well-shaped shrub with very attractive flowers and leaves. The leaves turn bright red to wine-colored in the fall and the ripe fruits attract lots of birds. These plants are widely adapted to various soil types and moisture regimes and should be widely used in ornamental horticulture.

Viburnum nudum L., called Possum Haw and Southern Wild Raisin, and Viburnum cassinoides L., called Withe-rod and Northern Wild Raisin are very similar. Both have leaves that are ovate to lanceolate and acuminate to acute. The leaf margins are entire to finely serrate. Both are medium to large shrubs that flower April to June. They produce white flowers and dark blue fruits. Viburnum nudum L. is common in the baygalls of western and northern Louisiana but can usually be found anywhere that Magnolia virginiana occurs in the state. Viburnum cassinoides L. is especially common in the Florida parishes and in the baygalls of Vernon Parish. It has narrower and longer leaves than does Viburnum nudum L. The fruits of both species are sweet but not very palatable. The tendency of these plants to lean over and have several vertical sprouts from the leaning stem limits their use in lawn plantings. Note that the common name "Possum Haw" is also used for the completely different shrub known as deciduous holly (Ilex decidua Walt.)

Because of the showy leaves, flowers, and fruits of the native viburnums, we should use them more in our ornamental plantings. They are excellent plants to attract birds and small mammals to our lawns. They have no noticeable pests. Most species can be transplanted easily and can be propagated by layering and by planting seeds.