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## LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



# Sneak Peek (Tentative Speakers) of the Louisiana Native Plant Society Meeting for February 7-9, 2020

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New Grasses by Geo. Vasey - Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan., 1885), pp. 6-7 (2 pages)

- To preserve and study native plants and their habitats
- To educate people on the value of native plants and the need to preserve and protect rare and endangered species
- To promote the propagation and use of native plants in the landscape
- To educate people on the relationship between our native flora and wildlife



**ERIC VANBERGEN**

Title: The Importance of Bringing Cajun Prairie Plants to Schools

Bio: Eric Vanbergen is a freshman at LSU majoring in Environmental Science. As a high school student at Ascension Episcopal School in Youngsville, Louisiana, he led two native plant restoration projects: a 3-acre planting of Cajun prairie seed and a Cajun prairie themed pollinator habitat garden

Description: Most people who live in Louisiana are clueless to the unique beauty and diversity of native prairie plant species that can be easily incorporated in the landscape. Introducing

these native plants to places like schools is crucial for bringing awareness of the importance of conserving rare native plants and protecting the animal species that depend on them.



**ANITA PANT**

Title: The Influence of Plant Diversity on Pollinator Species Richness and Abundance

Bio: Anita Pant is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Her research focuses on plant-insect interactions. Ms. Pant received a Master's degree in the Environmental Sciences from Tribhuvan University, Nepal. She has received many research and travel grants from different

organizations such as the Graduate Student Organization, UL Lafayette, The Louisiana Native Plant Society, The Ecology Center, Resources Himalaya Foundation. She has worked as a research associate at the "Living Earth, Nepal", where she was responsible for conducting soil and water analysis and report writing. She also worked as a data analyst at Forum of Environmental Management and Sustainable Development, Nepal. Along with her study, she is equally involved in volunteer work. She has volunteered as a judge in Science Olympiad (2016), secretary in Nepalese Student Association (NSA, 2016-2017), treasurer in NSA (2013-2014), teacher in Deneb International School (2007), and in many other activities and organizations.

Description: Plants depend on pollinators for their sexual reproduction and the pollina-

**A Huge Thanks to Bonnie LaBorde Johnson and Dr. Charles Allen for being Administrators for the Louisiana Native Plant Society Group.**

tors get food from the plants. The mutualistic relationship between plants and pollinators is important for natural and managed ecosystems. The number and diversity of pollinators are in decline due to habitat degradation, invasive species, climate change, and use of insecticides and pesticides. The presentation will focus on highlighting the influence of plant species richness on the pollinator species richness and abundance. Further, the presentation will focus on identifying plant species that attract a greater number and diversity of pollinators.



Steven Nevitt

#### STEVEN NEVITT

Title: Telling Your Cajun Prairie Story: Rediscovering Our Ecosystem Roots; Environmental Connections to the Ancient Environment Around Us. Normalizing the Discussion About the Cajun Prairie and its Benefits

Bio: Steve Nevitt is a Geoscientist with The Hise Company. He graduated from University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2017, with a Master of Science in Geology concentrating in paleoclimate reconstruction of coastal systems. He is currently the President of the Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society.

Teaching city-slickers and country-folks about prairies through school lessons, pocket prairies, technology and storytelling. Prairies are a significant

part of our history, supporting cattle, rice and crawfish production across the region. By reconnecting with the roots of our culture we can reestablish what has been lost. Showing others how incorporating prairies into our communities can make us resilient and healthy.

#### BILL FONTENOT

Title: Wildlife Garden Design: Concepts and Considerations

Bio: Since 1986 Bill Fontenot has dedicated his career in biology to restoring ecological integrity in lands, from the smallest urban gardens to the largest wildlife management areas. He served as Curator of Natural Sciences at the Lafayette Natural History Museum beginning in 1986, then as manager of the Acadiana Park Nature Station, where he retired in 2008. Since 1987 he has also operated his own wildlife management, "wildscape" design, and ecological restoration consulting business, specializing in ecological assessment, biological inventory, land-use planning, and wildlife-friendly native plant-oriented landscape planning. His consulting work has taken him to hundreds of sites throughout the midwestern and eastern U.S., serving wildlife management and conservation agencies, landscape designers, community planners, ecotourism interests, and private landowners.

He has published many natural

history-related articles in various newspapers, newsletters, magazines, tourist information guides, and scientific journals. He has authored/coauthored a number of books and publications including Native Gardening in the South (1992), A Cajun Prairie Restoration Chronicle (1995, with Drs. Charles Allen and Malcolm Vidrine), Gulf Coast Birds (2001, with Brian Miller), Louisiana Birdwatching (2004, [25-page introduction] with Bill Thompson III), Vanishing Before Our Eyes (2006, with Dr. Wylie Barrow, Jr.), Wings Over The Wetlands (2008), and Watching a Forest Grow (2008). After contributing a weekly nature column in the Lafayette, LA Sunday Advertiser newspaper for 22 years, he now produces a nature blog at <https://www.facebook.com/thenaturedude>.

In 2001, Fontenot was honored in receiving the Louisiana Wildlife Federation's Professional Conservationist of the Year award. In 2009, he received the Louisiana Ornithological Society's President's Award, and the Louisiana Native Plant Society's Karlene DeFatta Award for service to those organizations. In 2011 The Cullowhee Gardening with Native Plants Conference honored him with the Tom Dodd, Jr. Award of Excellence.

Description: Wild creatures possess a built-in set of search images which guide them in their selection of proper sites



Bill Fontenot

for reproduction, roosting/resting and feeding. At the same time, many homeowners and landscape managers are concerned about the “aesthetic costs” of installing wildlife-friendly designs, or are simply intimidated by the process of laying out the correct mix of trees, shrubs, vines, and perennials necessary to accomplish that goal. This presentation focuses on the identification of natural habitat components crucial to wildlife, and translating those components into the domestic confines of gardens and other human-built landscapes in a manner satisfactory to both ecological and aesthetic concerns.

#### **CHARLES M. ALLEN**

Title: Edible Useful Chlorophyll Organisms with Xylem

Bio: THE Man!

Description: A hands-on, actually more nose and taste bud talk about edible useful plants. Participants will be allowed to smell and taste plants plus sample freshly brewed teas.

#### **MALCOLM F. VIDRINE**

Title: Native Garden Propagules - Producing Plants for Your Prairie Garden From ‘Sticks’ (Stem and Root Cuttings)

Bio: Malcolm is a retired professor of biology from LSU Eunice. He has published more

than 100 scientific papers and 14 books on prairies, butterflies, mussels and mites. He propagates native prairie plants in his nursery under Live Oak trees in his front yard.

Description: Prairie gardens can be focused upon specific goals: grass gardens, mint gardens, sunflower gardens, pea gardens, milkweed gardens, Louisiana iris gardens, pollinator gardens and/or biodiversity gardens. The main concern is plant selection and production. Stem and root cuttings (sticks) are my preferred method of propagation. A list of readily available plants that can be propagated will be provided with instructions on methods for ‘stick’ production.

#### **JANE PATTERSON**

Title: Plants for Birds - Why Native Plants Matter

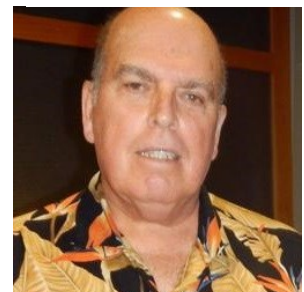
Bio: Jane Patterson is the current President of Baton Rouge Audubon Society, as well as the Education chair. She started birding in 2005 and has gotten into it in a big way, especially from the educational perspective. Jane started a bird club for kids in Baton Rouge (KidsWhoBird), and also teaches beginning bird classes for adults through the LSU Continuing Ed systems. She was honored at the National Audubon national conference in July 2014 with the Dutcher award for outstanding service by an Audubon Chapter leader for her efforts in bird related

education. Prior to becoming a birder, gardening was one of Jane's primary hobbies, so combining birding and gardening is one of her passions. She has also gotten into bird photography; what better subjects than all of our beautiful birds!. Jane retired from her career in state government in 2017 as the Director of Telecommunications where she was responsible for overseeing internet and phone services for Louisiana state government. .

Description: Our native birds rely on insects and plants that evolved with them, especially during breeding season. This talk will focus on changes you can make in your yard to support our native birds.



Charles Allen



Malcolm F. Vidrine



Jane Patterson

## "Geaux Grow Natives!" Project Update by Linda B. Auld, "BugLady"

It's mid July and in six short weeks, having survived the brain cooking days of August, we will be welcoming the cooler days of September. It will be time to get out to the garden with shovel and gloves. We will revive the plants that passed the grueling test of thriving on neglect while we were inside trying to stay cool. Many of our pretty annual plants having done their job of giving us bright colors all summer, will be sort of peaked out.

Meanwhile the report on my "Geaux Grow Natives!" Spring Showcase plants is this: "They are rocking and a-rolling!" Garden Phlox, Purple Coneflowers and Slender Mountain Mint (the three chosen nectar plants) are all in full bloom and are being visited daily by hungry butterflies plus other pollinators. Aquatic and Swamp milkweeds (*Asclepias perennis* and *incarnata*), the two native milkweed choices, have been very successful in attracting female Monarch butterflies to lay their eggs and the caterpillars have eaten them down to sticks. Partridge Pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*) is calling female Cloudless Sulphur and Sleepy Orange butterflies to lay their eggs.

"Geaux Grow Natives!" project has stimulated both interest and conversation in our local gardening community. More and more folks are ask-

ing their nurseries for native plants! But before we say, "Mission accomplished!", let's get ready for round two: the Fall Plants Showcase. The three suggested nectar plant additions to your fall garden are Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), and Ironweed (*Vernonia*). The white globular buttonbush flowers are packed with pollen. On our woodland hikes we see a variety of skippers, bees, and butterflies enjoying the nectar of these unique blossoms. The bright red Cardinal Flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*) is a favorite of the Sulphur butterflies and should be planted close to the Partridge Pea. Planting the preferred nectar and host plants together will insure better butterfly visitation. Ironweed is the perfect invitation for late summer/autumn butterflies. These tall, gorgeous purple flower heads reaching high into the sky provide a landing pad for the larger swallowtails such as Giant and Tiger. Buckeye butterflies also adore the pollen.

As far as the four caterpillar host plants, the two native milkweeds, Aquatic and Swamp, will be repeated since many gardeners are still in the transition of changing out their tropical milkweed to native varieties to lessen the chance of transmitting the Monarch's O.E. parasite over winter.

Coupled with these two are the Passion flower vine (*Passiflora incarnata*) for the Gulf Fritillary and the Hop tree or Wafer Ash (*Ptelea trifoliata*) for the Giant Swallowtail. If you're lucky, you might one day find both Gulf and Variegated Fritillary caterpillars on your passion flower vines. They appear to have stinging barbs but they do NOT have the ability to sting. It's their natural defense to trick predators. The Giant Swallowtail caterpillar, on the other hand, uses the "I'm a bird poop" defense. Isn't nature grand?


So well planned and balanced. And all of this fascinating activity can begin merely by creating the invitation with these plants. I hope you will share your love of nature with everyone you know by helping promote the right native plant selection for maximum benefit.

Want a piece of this action? Want to know where and when you can get these plants? The fun begins on Saturday, September 7 then every Saturday of that month you can find me at the following dates, locations and times.

### Fall, 2019 Plant Promotional Tour Dates


Sept. 7 Jefferson Feed  
9:00 am - 11:30 am  
Double M Feed  
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm


















## GEAUX GROW NATIVES!

### -FALL, 2019-



**Plant with a purpose! Choose these native plants to attract butterflies to your garden!**

 <p><b>Monarch</b></p>	 <p><b>Gulf Fritillary</b></p>	 <p><b>Giant Swallowtail</b></p>
<h3 style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Preferred Nectar Plants</h3>		
 <p><b>Buttonbush</b> <i>Cephalanthus</i></p>	 <p><b>Cardinal Flower</b> <i>Lobelia cardinalis</i></p>	 <p><b>Ironweed</b> <i>Vernonia</i></p>
 <p><b>Monarch</b></p>	 <p><b>Gulf Fritillary</b></p>	 <p><b>Giant Swallowtail</b></p>
<h3 style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block;">Caterpillar Host Plants</h3>		
 <p><b>Aquatic milkweed</b> <i>Asclepias perennis</i></p>	 <p><b>Swamp Milkweed</b> <i>Asclepias incarnata</i></p>	 <p><b>Passion Flower Vine</b> <i>Passiflora incarnata</i></p>
 <p><b>Hop Tree</b> <i>Wafer Ash</i></p>		

Sept. 14  
Crosby Arboretum  
9:30 am - 12 noon

Sept. 21  
Harold's Plants  
9:00 am - 11:30 am  
Rose Garden Center  
12:30 pm - 3:00 pm

Sept. 28  
Clegg's Siegen Lane  
9:30 am - 12 noon  
Clegg's- Denham Springs  
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

The list of the participating locations:

Barber Laboratories  
6444 Jefferson Highway  
Harahan  
504-739-5715

Charvet's Nursery  
4511 Clearview Pkwy  
Metairie  
504-888-7700

Clegg's Nursery  
5696 Siegen Lane  
Baton Rouge  
225-292-9153

Clegg's Nursery  
10645 Greenwell Springs Rd.  
Baton Rouge  
225-275-7006

Clegg's Nursery  
31275 LA Hwy. 16  
Denham Springs  
225-791-6060

Clegg's Nursery  
274 N. Donmoor  
Baton Rouge  
225-927-1419

Crosby Arboretum  
370 Ridge Road  
Picayune, MS  
985-641-3600

Double M Feed  
8400 Jefferson Hwy  
Harahan  
504-738-5007

Harold's Plants  
1135 Press Street  
New Orleans  
504-947-7554

Jefferson Feed  
4421 Jefferson Hwy  
Jefferson  
504-733-8572

LongueVue Gardens  
7 Bamboo Road  
New Orleans  
504-488-5488

Options, Inc.  
19362 W. Shelton Rd.  
Hammond, LA  
985-345-6269

Pelican Greenhouse

# 2 Celebration Drive  
New Orleans  
504-483-9437

Rose Garden Center  
4005 Westbank Expressway  
Marrero  
504-341-5664

All of the plants are being grown locally. Support your local garden centers and growers by adding some of the Fall Plant Selection. Enhance your garden diversity by trying these natives. You will be amazed at all the new critters that will accept the invitation to your garden party.

My new book, "BugLady's Butterfly Summer" will also be available for sale and will be personally signed by the author! It is 15 short stories about raising butterflies accompanied by 31 color plates of what I raised. It's packed with information on range, habitat, host plants, life cycles and fun facts. Go adventuring with me on woodland trails and in my garden. Be fascinated by the butterflies and caterpillars I discover. Hope to see you at one of the plant promotion tour stops!

## Native Plant Conservation Campaign by Emily B. Roberson and Doug Tallamy on June 14, 2019

PMB 151 \* 1459 18th St. \* San Francisco, CA 94107

<https://plantsocieties.cnps.org/index.php>

Save Plants, Save The Planet, Save Ourselves – Native Plants and Nature Based Solutions to Climate Change And Other Threats to Humanity

Sea level rise, record breaking heat waves, floods, pollution, mass extinction – 2019 is frightening! What if there were one simple thing individuals, businesses and communities could do to address these problems? There is! Plant native plants!

Native wildflowers and trees are beautiful. They remind us of what is special, even unique about the places we live. However, as ecological threats to people and the planet intensify, we must recognize another characteristic of native plants. They support our ecosystems and the essential ecosystem services they deliver in ways introduced plants cannot. Why is this so?

Ecosystems are run by plants and animals. The key is that, through eons of coevolution, only native plants can sustain the abundance and diversity of the animals we need to run our

ecosystems: the 4000 species of native bees in North America, the hundreds of species of insectivorous birds, bats, lizards, bears, and foxes. Above all, only natives can support the insects that provide essential protein for these creatures. Those birds whose morning songs brighten your day rear their young on insects. A world without native plants and insects is a world without biological diversity, and a world without biological diversity is a world without humans!

The good news is that by saving wildlife with native plants, we also battle climate change and other environmental woes. Let's compare native grasses with lawn grass. Our native grasses have deep roots that make them drought resistant, reduce soil erosion and flooding, filter pollutants from ground water and increase rainwater infiltration. Best of all, these plants remove tons of carbon from the atmosphere and pump it into the soil and out of harm's way. Lawn grass, in contrast, increases storm water runoff, and adds countless tons of polluting chemicals to our watersheds, and is the worst plant choice for carbon sequestration.

Nothing sequesters carbon and

manages watersheds as well as native forests. New York City's celebrated tap water quality does not depend on expensive filtration. Instead, the city invests in conserving and restoring watersheds in the Catskills to purify water for its 9 million residents. Philadelphia is creating a "green mosaic" of gardens, green roofs and wetlands that reduces flooding, water pollution and sewage spills during severe storms. These cities save taxpayers at least \$15 billion that would otherwise be spent to update grey infrastructure (storm drains, filtration plants, etc.) to address these problems. Other cities are adopting parallel strategies.

Leaves and shoots act similarly, absorbing air pollutants, including greenhouse gases, while simultaneously releasing the oxygen we breathe. According to the U.S. Forest Service, urban trees in the United States remove 784,000 tons of air pollution annually. Planting more native trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals would provide even more pollution control. Restoring native plant communities could absorb enough carbon to compensate for more than 20% of U.S. greenhouse emissions.



Native plants also moderate local climates. The water that a single tree releases daily into its surroundings has a cooling effect equivalent to two domestic air conditioners. Trees also create shade, lowering local temperatures and reducing energy use and emissions from building cooling.

Naturally dense native plant communities can also buffer severe storms. Roots and shoots absorb energy from wind and water, lessening storm strength and damage. Saltmarshes, wetlands and other native plant communities prevented more than \$600 million in property damage during Hurricane Sandy. Native plants can provide coastal storm protection at substantially lower cost than concrete breakwaters and flood barriers.

Collectively these processes are called Nature-Based Solutions. The United Nations, World Bank, and European Union are among those promoting Nature Based Solutions to confront climate change, natural disasters and other perils. Nature-Based Solutions protect us at a lower cost, and require fewer chemicals, less water, and less maintenance than nonnative plants or grey infrastructure.

So let's fill our parks, gardens, roadsides and open spaces with natives, and then sit back, count your savings and enjoy the rewards. You can do it in your garden or on your farm. Cities can do it along roadways,

in parks and public spaces. Our gardens and communities will become more ecologically resilient, comfortable, safe, and low maintenance.

Plant natives to help save people and the planet. Do it for the wildflowers, birds and butterflies; do it for your children; do it for fun. Do it for cleaner air and water. Do it to lower your taxes and cut your power and water bills. Contact your local native plant society or botanic garden to find out more and get started!

For more information on Nature Based Solutions, see the Ecosystem Services section of our website.

Native Plant Conservation Campaign Affiliate Organizations  
 Alabama Wildflower Society  
 Albuquerque Bio Park  
 Arizona Native Plant Society  
 Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum  
 Arkansas Native Plant Society  
 Botanic Gardens Conservation International  
 Botanical Society of Washington (DC)  
 California Native Plant Society  
 Colorado Native Plant Society  
 Florida Native Plant Society  
 Georgia Native Plant Society  
 Grand Prairie Friends of Illinois  
 Herb Society of America  
 Idaho Native Plant Society  
 Illinois Native Plant Society  
 Indiana Native Plant Society  
 Institute of Applied Ecology  
 Iowa Native Plant Society  
 Kansas Native Plant Society  
 Kauai Native Plant Society  
 Kentucky Native Plant Society

Kinnikinnick Native Plant Society (N IDAHO)  
 Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
 Laukahi (Hawaii)  
 Louisiana Native Plant Society  
 Maryland Native Plant Society  
 Minnesota Native Plant Society  
 Missouri Native Plant Society  
 Montana Native Plant Society  
 Native Plant Society of New Jersey  
 Native Plant Society of New Mexico  
 Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio  
 Native Plant Society of Oregon  
 Native Plant Society of Staten Island  
 Native Plant Society of Texas  
 Native Prairies Association of Texas  
 Nevada Native Plant Society  
 Plant Trust/New England  
 Wild Flower Society  
 New Mexico Rare Plant Technical Council  
 New York Botanic Garden  
 North Carolina Botanical Garden  
 North Carolina Native Plant Society  
 Oklahoma Native Plant Society  
 Pinelands Preservation Alliance (NJ)  
 Rhode Island Wild Plant Society  
 Santa Barbara Botanic Garden  
 South Carolina Native Plant Society  
 Utah Native Plant Society  
 Virginia Native Plant Society  
 Washington Native Plant Society  
 West Virginia Native Plant Society  
 Wild Ones  
 Wyoming Native Plant Society



## Mini Prairie Plantings by Mike Glaspell

### WHAT IS A MINI PRAIRIE?

My definition of a mini prairie is a simulated prairie planting done on a very small scale, suitable for most suburban yards, consisting of mainly native species of grasses and forbs.

While a mini prairie will bring some of the benefits of a prairie habitat to our own yards, note that I am not calling them prairie restorations. Prairie restorations are very complex and very difficult to achieve, especially on the scale we will be talking about. Mini prairies are more of a simulation, if they require a label. Natural prairies will have hundreds of species of plants, whereas I think we would be more than successful to even achieve twenty or so species.

### WHY PLANT A PRAIRIE?

There are a myriad of reasons to bring a taste of the wild into our personal space. Besides the aesthetically pleasing aspects of having beautiful flowers, there is a bit of duty and purpose to it.

Mini prairies are resilient. Once established, they are drought tolerant, require no additional fertilizer or irrigation, and are generally easy to maintain. Their plants also have extensive root systems that sequester carbon, create soil, make land more water permeable and less

susceptible to flood, and can remove contaminants and excess nutrients from water runoff before it reaches our waterways.

Philosophically speaking, there seems to be a calming effect and sense of belonging to surround ourselves with a semblance of true nature, as it was intended to be. As I've heard a well-known naturalist Bill Fontenot, "The Nature Dude," reference, there is a sense of time and place associated with native plantings. I think it helps to keep us grounded to experience seasons in our plantings, as well as a sense of place, based on the plants that grow around us. With modern conventional landscaping of "cookie cutter" evergreen mounded shrubs, if I were to show you a picture of a conventionally landscaped home, it would be difficult to distinguish what part of the country it is in, much less the season. Prairies and native plantings have a seasonal progression that reminds us of "when and where" we are in the world.

Mini prairies will bring a little piece of the wild to us. Since I've planted a couple of mini prairies, along with other native plants scattered throughout the landscape, I have been amazed at the multitude of wildlife that now visits our yard. I can experience an adventure and numerous photo opportunities without ever

leaving home. Insects (including native pollinators), bird species (some of which I have never encountered), and numerous other invertebrates are now in abundance. Now, instead of just stopping to smell the roses, I stop to observe and experience life, in all forms, all around me.

### GETTING STARTED

First and foremost, find a place. Most prairie plants are sun loving and will require at least a half day or more of sun. You also need to take your soil type into consideration. Many prairie type plants generally like well drained soil, perhaps slightly on the drier side. But take comfort, as South Louisiana is notoriously lacking in "drier" soils, these plants are widely adaptable and there are always species and seed mixes for different soil types.

Next, you will have to make a plan and decide on your method of establishment. I will discuss my experiences with getting two separate mini prairie plantings started and the ways I went about it.

Whichever method you choose, you will likely have to contend with turfgrass lawn. The elimination of turfgrass can be achieved with several applications of herbicide (I know this a dirty word for some, but it is used sparingly and is very effective), or a





method of smothering the turfgrass until it is dead.

For my first planting, I applied a few applications of herbicide about a month apart toward the end of summer and into fall and broadcast a prairie type seed mix in late winter/early spring. Seed to soil contact is very important for establishment, so I raked out most of the dead turfgrass prior to broadcasting seed. After seeding, I then compacted the area by walking on it to make sure that the seed was in good contact with the soil. Keep the soil moist with irrigation until the seedlings get established. You have less control of the plant layout with this method as a seed mix is generally used. Over time, the plants establish themselves and through re-seeding, natural spread and competition, they find their micro niches inside the prairie where they will perform best. In my experience, the seed broadcast method provides a greater diversity of plant species.

For my second planting, I placed a layer of cardboard topped with a thick layer of mulch, obtained for free from a tree trimming service, and allowed it to sit for about a year before planting in it. Some also use solarization, involving the use of plastic sheeting laid over an area to smother and burn the grass underneath, though I have no experience with this method. With this particular planting, I used plugs

that I grew from seed in starter packs. I obtained several species of locally sourced prairie plant seeds and started the seeds either in late summer or early spring. Once established in the planting cells, I plugged them into the planting area a little at a time, as they were mature enough to do so. This method has proved to be slightly slower and I will be adding diversity a little at a time, probably over several years. However, you have far greater control of the placement of a particular species and can create “drifts” of color and texture, which may be a little more natural in appearance.

So far, I am pleased with both methods I’ve used to establish my mini prairie plantings. They each have had their pros and cons, so I will not recommend one over the other. Choose whatever method works for your situation.

### MAINTENANCE OF MINI PRAIRIES

As far as establishment goes, control of weeds will be the initial concern for your prairie. The plug and mulching method had a far less weed control issue than the broadcast seeding on open ground did. The mulch between my plugs acted as a groundcover to suppress weeds to a large extent. Both of my mini prairies are small enough that I was able to control weeds by hand for the most part. If you are unable to

control weeds by hand, mowing at a high setting above the establishing prairie plants can keep the weeds at bay until the prairie plantings take hold. It is important to have plants spaced fairly close together to create a groundcover to discourage weed growth.

In late winter, it will be time to mow or burn your mini prairie to get it ready for the new growth. In this regard, I will again be treating both of my prairie plantings differently.

My oldest planting is in the back of my yard and in a location where it is safe to have a controlled burn. With a water hose on hand, I start a small controlled burn when conditions are favorable, taking wind speed and direction into account. I only have smaller grass species, so fuel is somewhat limited, which is favorable for me, as it keeps the flames low and controlled. Extreme caution needs to be used with this method and only as local laws will allow.

My newer planting will be mowed/cut back. It is in my front yard and has young, limbed up trees among the prairie plants that I would not want to damage by fire. There is also still wood mulch that is not completely decomposed that would likely be susceptible to fire.

Besides some occasional hand control of the more aggressive species that may want to take over the prairie, this is about all the maintenance that will be

required.

### A FEW MISCELLANEOUS THINGS TO CONSIDER WITH MINI PRAIRIES.

Local ordinances, HOA's and neighbor complaints may be a few obstacles you will face. I don't have any of these issues, but did some research just in case. Most agree that you have to make your mini prairie appear intentional. This may mean a well defined border, surrounded by lawn, and contained to a "bed" if you will. Also, signage such as "Wildflower Meadow", "Pollinator Garden", "Native Plant Habitat" etc., can further indicate that the planting is intentional and not an issue of neglect. You can also speak to neighbors to explain what you're doing beforehand and make them feel a part of the process. Who knows, maybe they'll even join you or at least become an ally.

The mini prairie will not always appear tidy and neat. Some of these plants will get rangy and most will die back in the winter. I personally don't mind this as the winter plant structure and seed heads are also appealing to me, especially the grasses.

I intentionally did not get into individual plant species as that is a personal preference. Most will go with some type of seed mix, which should be sourced as locally as possible, as they are most likely best adapted to

your growing conditions. Ratios of grasses to wildflowers should also be considered.

Natural prairies usually have a high ratio of grass species compared to forbs. You may want to flip this ratio for a mini prairie as the grasses can dominate a small space.

Patience is needed. Many prairie plants will not flower the first year as they are perennials that use the first year for establishment. Most seed mixes compensate for this with a percentage of annuals that will flower the first year.

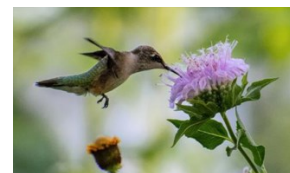
Your prairie will change in appearance not only with the seasons, but from year to year as well. As plants get established, some will naturally be more aggressive, spreading via root rhizomes and/or prolific reseeding. Some will not do well in the conditions they are in and wither away and disappear in a few years. As mentioned previously, there may be a need for some control of the more aggressive species to prevent your prairie from becoming a monoculture. When dealing with ecosystems in a miniature version, you will not always be able to just let nature take its course. Some intervention may occasionally be required. On a positive note, this type of maintenance is very limited and fairly easy to stay on top of. It is also wonderful to find that "surprise" plant or flower that you never saw before all of sudden erupt and

put on a display without warning.

### IN CONCLUSION

I tried to give an honest account of the few challenges of establishing a mini prairie, but I hope the overall takeaway is that this will be something you can and want to accomplish. I love all my native trees, shrubs and plants, but I have to say that the mini prairie is the most rewarding of all. The diversity of life in both flora and fauna and their interaction is captivating beyond words. Give it a shot and best of luck!

Mike Glaspell is a member of the Native Plant Initiative of Greater New Orleans and the Louisiana Native Plant Society. He and his wife, Jessica, are hobby landscapers, gardening with mostly native plants at their home in Lockport, La. They also enjoy photographing the native flora and fauna of the area.





## New Grasses by Geo. Vasey - Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan., 1885), pp. 6-7 (2 pages)

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### New Grasses.

By GEO. VASEY.

**TRISETUM LUDOVICIANUM.**—Culms 2 to 2.5 ft. high, stout, erect, smooth, leafy; lower 3 or 4 leaves near the base 6–10 inches long, the margins and sheaths pubescent; upper leaves (2) larger and with long, striate, smooth sheaths, the upper sheath 9–10 inches long and reaching to the base of the panicle, blade 6–10 inches long, 3–4 lines wide, roughish. Panicle 6–10 inches long and about one inch wide, erect, nodding at the apex, rather loose, the branches semiverticillate, erect, mostly in fives, unequal, the longer ones 2 to 4 inches long and flowering nearly to the base, the rachis and pedicels smooth or nearly so, pedicels about as long as the flowers; spikelets 2- to 3- (mostly 2-) flowered, the lower flower unawned; outer glumes smooth or slightly hispid on the keel, 2.5 to 3.5 lines long, 3-nerved, acute, with broadly scarious margins, the upper obovate, the lower rather shorter and narrower; the flowering-glume of the lower flower 3–3.5 lines long, narrowly lanceolate, nearly smooth, acute or acutish, but not bifid; second flowering-glume 2–2.5 lines long, punctulate scabrous, rather thicker than the lower one, with a rather scarious margin, acuminate, but hardly toothed at the apex, obscurely 3-nerved, dorsal awn from the upper fourth, as long as or longer than its glume, the palea one-third shorter than the glumes, membranaceous, bifid at the apex; rhachilla sparsely pubescent, terminated with a short rudiment, or occasionally with an imperfect flower.

Found along the borders of a cane-field in Louisiana, by Rev. A. B. Langlois. Doubtfully referred to the genus *Ventenata* by Prof.

Hackel, but I think its affinity is clearly with *Trisetum*. Very nearly the same structure of flowers occurs in *T. palustre*.

**LEPTOCHLOA LANGLOISII.**—Culm smooth, stout, leafy, 3 to 4 ft. high, the radical leaves one-third as long as the culm, loosely sheathing the base of the culm, joints or nodes 7 or 8, the sheaths compressed, striate, loose, rather glaucous, the leaves a foot long, 3 to 4 lines wide, keeled, somewhat scabrous, the upper one sheathing the base of the panicle; panicle racemose, 10–12 inches long, 2 inches wide, loose, erect or nodding above, the simple branches very numerous (100 or more), crowded below, erect-spreading, irregular on the axis, singly or 2–3 together, 2 to 3 inches long, mostly less than half an inch apart, flower-bearing throughout; spikelets 3–4-flowered, sessile and imbricated, about one and a half lines long; outer glumes unequal, membranaceous, ovate-lanceolate, acute, slightly scabrous on the keel, the lower about half a line, the upper about one line long; flowering-glumes little more than one line, lanceolate, acute or short-mucronate, 3-nerved, slightly pubescent on the keel, and ciliate on the marginal nerves below; palea a little shorter, bidentate.

This large and showy species was found in Louisiana by Rev. A. B. Langlois, for whom it is named.

**LEPTOCHLOA NEALLEYI.**—Culms 2 to 2.5 ft. high, and, with the sheaths, smooth, with about three nodes; leaves 6–10 inches long, 2–3 lines wide, the sheaths loose and striate, the upper one long and sheathing the base of the panicle; panicle 8–10 inches long, narrow, the simple branches about one inch long, in threes or fives, or partly scattered, closely flowered; spikelets small (little more than a line long), 3–5-flowered; outer glumes unequal, ovate, acutish, thick and green on the keel, the lower, half as long; flowering-glumes .5 to .75 line long, 3-nerved, oblong, sparsely pubescent on the nerves, the apex emarginate, obtuse and finely denticulate; palea narrow, as long as the flowering-glume, 2-keeled, finely pubescent on the keels.

Collected in Texas by Mr. G. C. Nealley, for whom it is named. Probably this and the preceding have been collected before, but so far as I know have not previously been named.



Jackie Duncan, LNPS Treasurer,  
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## Mark Your Calendars!!

Next Louisiana Native Plant  
Society Meeting is February  
7-9, 2020

Next LNPS Newsletter is  
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