



# Gaillardia

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society Newsletter

## CALENDAR

**Note: the events dated below are identified either by a page number for a fuller description of the event or the name of a person to contact.**

### 1998

- Sept. 14: NE Chapter meets at 6:30 for potluck supper at Tulsa Garden Ctr. Program by Bill Sartin. P. 10.
- Sept. 20: 1:30 p.m. field trip to Mohawk Park: pg. 10
- Sept. 28: Regular Monday evening meeting of the Central Chapter, at OSU Tech's horticulture center, 4<sup>th</sup> and Portland, Oklahoma City. 7:30 p.m. P. 10
- October 15-18: Joint annual meeting with NPSOT and NPSNM, Amarillo, Texas. P. 8
- Oct. 16-18: Oklahoma Academy of Science fall field meeting at Sequoyah State Park.
- Oct. 26: Regular Monday evening meeting of the Central Chapter, at OSU Horticulture Bldg. 7:30 (P. 10)
- Nov. 15: Gaillardia deadline
- Nov. 30: Regular Monday evening meeting, Central Chapter, OSU Hort. Center Bldg. 7:30 (p. 10)
- Dec. 1: Photo contest deadline (see blue insert)

### 1999

- Feb. 6: Indoor Outing in Chickasha. Lary Magrath
- May, date not set: 22d annual Wildflower Workshop.

**Note: all members are invited to all chapter field trips or meetings, including board meetings, and are encouraged to bring guests.**

### ONPS Thanks These Special Fund Contributors

Anne Long Fund  
Margaret Jerabek

Harriet Barclay Fund  
Margaret Jerabek, Davida Phillips, James Ownby, John and Janet Slater

And welcomes new life members:  
Chet and Maureen Bynum, Norman

*The purpose of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society is to encourage the study, protection, propagation, appreciation and use of Oklahoma's native plants.*

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**Blue insert: Photo Contest Entry Blank**

Printed on recycled paper

Volume 13, Number 3  
AUTUMN 1998

**COPY AND ART DEADLINE  
FOR NEXT ISSUE IS  
15 November 1998**

☛ Contributions from members are welcome!

**PRESIDENT'S PARAGRAPH**

by Ruth Boyd

The thing uppermost in my mind as I write these words is the terrific orchid field trip we had on August 8. Bear in mind that the deadline for submission of articles for the newsletter is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the month that the Gaillardia is mailed. By the time you read this the trip will be old news but I have some things to say about it anyway.

If you missed this one because you thought it would be too hot and dry, let me tell you, you missed out on a really great outing with outstanding people, orchids or not. We had 26 participants, *11 of them not members yet*, who had seen news releases in newspapers as far flung as Bartlesville, Antlers and Oklahoma City. But we did see orchids and my favorites at that...the peach colored yellow fringed orchids and their accompanying ferns. Yes, it was hot and yes, it was dry but not like it had been for weeks before. I won't go anymore into the flora because that will be covered elsewhere by those who know what they're talking about.

Our members, Ingabee and Harry Redus, own both the Hugo Inn and the Village Inn in Hugo. That was my first choice of motels but since we accidentally planned the trip on the same weekend as the annual Hugo Blue Grass Festival, they and most of the surrounding area were already booked-up. I managed to get a room in Idabel, however. As we drove through Hugo on the way to Idabel, we stopped to say hello to Harry and Ingabee and found they had a cancellation and we could stay with them. They even moved an extra bed into the room to accomodate us. Talk about good friends! Because we didn't have to drive all the way into Idabel, we were able to take in the Friday evening program of the Festival and had a very good time.

The newsletter mailing committee usually meets on the Saturday closest to the middle of the month in which the letters are mailed. Saturdays are a must because several members of the committee have jobs. I don't tell you this just so you will think we are wonderful and work very hard for you. However, we are, and do, and now you can be grateful. The reason I'm pointing this out to you is that it leaves us with a problem. What do you do when your field trip committee whom you love and couldn't do without, plans a wonderful field trip on the Saturday that you are supposed to be working your fingers to the bone preparing Gaillardias for the mail? I don't know how the rest of the committee will handle this but I will be on the Talimena Trail. What it means to you is that you will receive your newsletter a week later than usual. I don't think you will really care

or would have noticed it until I mentioned it, bulk mailing being cheap for a very good reason.

By the time you read this, and surely you do read every word of this outstanding publication, you will have received our special mailing with registration form, program, etc. for the annual meeting October 15 through 18 in Amarillo. We don't have the information yet but it will soon be here. Peter Loos, president of the Texas group, has told me that the NM group estimated they might have 75 participants and we made the same estimate for OK. Texas usually has at least 200! I know our quality is up to theirs and hope the quantity does us proud also.

This will be my last President's Paragraph because after the annual meeting we will have a new president. I'll still pop up on these pages however, probably every time the editor relaxes her vigil. I believe we have had a pretty good year. I want to sincerely thank the officers, board members-at-large and all those serving on committees for their cooperation. It takes a lot of hard working people to make an organization like this function properly. In a time when almost everyone has more to do than they need, their additional efforts for the ONPS are especially appreciated.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT**

The ONPS Nominating Committee, Paul Buck, Chairman, reports the following slate of officers to be presented for approval at the annual meeting in Amarillo on October 17, 1998:

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| President                      | Sheila Strawn                   |
| Vice President                 | Tina Julich                     |
| Secretary                      | Clare Miller                    |
| Treasurer                      | Judy Jordan                     |
| Board of Directors, exp. 2001: | Berlin Heck and Iris McPherson. |

Dr. Sheila Strawn is immediate past president of the Central Chapter and current board member. Lives in Midwest City, and teaches at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee.

Tina Julich is the current president of the Central Chapter, lives in the country between Noble and Tecumseh, where she maintains a great wild habitat.

Clare Miller is continuing in the position she has ably filled for two terms already. She lives in Tulsa.

Judy Jordan is also repeating a position she has filled before. Judy is retired from the Oklahoma Museum of Natural History and lives in the country east of Norman.

Berlin Heck is the manager of the Little River National Wildlife Refuge. He lives on the preserve with his wife Pat, a gardener of wide reputation.

Iris McPherson lives near Perkins, south of Stillwater. She is a retired mathematics professor and is active in The Nature Conservancy and other environmental organizations.

"Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." Groucho Marx

By Leslie Cole-Jackson

### **What do Weeds, Milk, and Abe Lincoln's Mother Have in Common?**

According to U. T. Waterfall, eastern Oklahoma is home to *Eupatorium rugosum*, commonly known as "snakeroot", "white snakeroot" or "richweed". This is a notorious plant that influenced the European settlement of the eastern half of North America and may even have killed a president's mother.

*Eupatorium rugosum* is a native perennial that grows 2 to 4 feet tall and spreads from seeds and heavy rhizomes. Its leaves are 3 to 5 inches long, are opposite, broad at base, tapering to a point with coarsely toothed margins. Small white flowers appear from July to October in flat-topped clusters on the main branches.

White snakeroot is found in ranges and pastures throughout the eastern U.S., to a line from Minnesota to Texas. This plant likes low moist areas or stream borders and open woods. During the year or two following clearing in areas where it is established white snakeroot often forms dense stands to the exclusion of almost all other plants, a factor that almost certainly increased its toxic potential to early settlers.

Since the days of the American Revolution a febrile disease of humans, characterized by weakness, nausea, constipation and prostration, has occasionally reached epidemic proportions. In certain areas, locally and sporadically it caused loss of human life second to no other disease. In time this disease came to be called "milksickness" because the settlers associated it with the ingestion of milk from sick cattle. These cattle were sick with "trembles", a very good description of their clinical signs.

These related diseases of people and cattle were first reported in North Carolina and seemed to follow the settlers as they moved westward. "Milksickness" reached a peak in incidence in the first half of the 1800's. It was so devastating in some areas that the human population was reduced to less than one-half its original number in one to a few years. Occasionally whole villages were abandoned due to the tough-won knowledge that only certain areas produced the disease. It is stated that "milksickness" killed Abraham Lincoln's mother. Many years and many theories were to pass before investigators eschewed preconceived ideas (such as "soil miasmas", spider-webs or poison ivy) about the disease and it was recognized that "milksickness" was produced by the

ingestion of milk, butter, or possibly meat from animals in turn poisoned by ingestion of *E. rugosum*.

The toxic substance in *E. rugosum* is a yellow unsaturated aromatic alcohol named appropriately "tremetol". It is found primarily in the green tissues and decreases as the plant dries, although 6-month old hay containing *E. rugosum* has poisoned horses. Other than through milk, tremetol is not readily excreted by animals, thus it has a cumulative poisoning effect. Lactating animals accumulate toxic doses of tremetol more slowly because it is actively secreted in their milk. Suckling animals and people drinking milk from the family cow are often poisoned.

The distribution of "milksickness" is more restricted than the range of *E. rugosum* and many environmental factors influence its toxicity. Cases of "trembles" have been observed in sheep, cattle, horses, hogs, fowl and people ingesting white snakeroot. Symptoms in animals are loss of weight, trembling, especially on exertion, depression, labored breathing, constipation, nausea, weakness, inability to stand and death in 2 to a few days. Humans and animals often develop ketosis. In "milksickness areas" human doctors learned to diagnose this malady from the characteristic odor of acetone on the breath of their patients. Ten to 25% of humans affected with the milksickness died and recovery of the survivors was slow. Relapses following even moderate exertion were common. Survivors often suffered permanent disability.

Animals tend to be poisoned more by *E. rugosum* during dry years because they seek out the damp shady places where this normally distasteful plant grows, and then browse toxic amounts of it. The absence of more desirable forage will also result in more livestock poisonings. The modern practices of pooling the milk of many cows and from several dairies, and the practice of pasturization both contribute to all but eliminating the chances of modern milk-drinkers acquiring milksickness.

Kelly Kindscher's book *Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie* mentions *Eupatorium perfoliatum*, a white flowered relative of *E. rugosum*, as being much used in the early Anglo folk medicine but not so much by indigenous peoples. "There is probably no plant in American domestic practice that has more extensive or frequent use than this". I wonder if cases of mistaken identity between *E. perfoliatum* and *E. rugosum* added to the number of cases of "milksickness"?

With current tendencies towards alternative or herbal medications and towards all things labeled "natural", consumers need to keep in mind that substances like "tremetol" from *E. rugosum*, cyanide in cherry pits or coumarin in buckeyes and other plants are all natural "herbal" compounds too.

*E. rugosum* historically has significantly affected the European settlement of our country and the health of our citizens. White snakeroot is still out there for us to locate and appreciate. However, modern medicine, food handling practices and animal husbandry has reduced the impact of *E. rugosum* and milksickness to an interesting history lesson. *Continued on page 4*

**CONSERVATION CORNER**

Excerpt from "Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture 1888". Published by Washington: Government of Printing Office. 1889.

Submitted by Dr. Sheila Strawn

"Report of the Commissioner of Agriculture—Division of Forestry: . . ."One of the most important events of the year in relation to the forestry reform movement was the meeting in November of the American Forestry Congress and the Southern Forestry Congress simultaneously, at Atlanta, Ga. The two congresses were merged in one, henceforth to be the American Forestry Congress. Three days were occupied with the reading of papers and the discussion of forest topics. Committees were appointed for the purpose of securing appropriate legislation by the National Congress for the protection of the public forests, and by state legislatures for the promotion of the interests of forestry in the several States.

"Lastly I should mention, as not the least—perhaps the most welcome—development of the year, the establishment of a journal in this country, which not only devotes a part of its space to the discussion of matters relating to the forest, but is bold enough to enter the name on its title. 'Garden and Forest' is a weekly journal of horticulture, landscape art, and forestry, published by Prof. C.S. Sargent, well known by his census work on the forest flora and forests of the United States. It has brought during the year a large amount of forestry reading of the first order; and while for reasons of finance it is still necessary to give the discussion of matters relating to gardening and landscape architecture the lion's share, it is to be hoped that the readers of forest literature will so grow in numbers as to make this part of the paper more and more its prominent feature. . . The general and scientific press have also brought forth considerable discussion on forestry matters during the year. The question of forest influences has been widely discussed, and especially the influence of forests on rainfall."

NOTE: The Department of Agriculture was created by an act of Congress in 1862 and was first headed by a commissioner of agriculture. In 1888, the Division of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture, created in 1881, was just 7 years old. In 1889 Congress made the USDA a part of the executive branch, headed by a secretary of agriculture. It was not until 1905, under Gifford Pinchot, that it became The National Forest Service.

My father's cousin sent this book to us just as he had found it, filled with memorabilia as if it

had been kept as a scrapbook. Interleaved between its pages were articles like "Cleveland Once More President of the United States". Also inside were pages from "The Iowa Temperance Magazine" and "Lost and Found Poems and Songs" from "The Weekly Inter Ocean and Farmer", Friday, March 14, 1913. The tracing of my grandmother's hand must have been made when she was about 5 years old. That would have been just about 1888.

We can learn a great deal from the practice of conservation and preservation. Those who "save" don't know always know the reasons why they save. Conservation is a spirit instilled in people by those who love them. If you don't know what to say to the younger generation these days to show them that you love them, talk to them about their heritage, who their distant relatives are, what they did & why they did it. Find an old book and look at it together. Talk about how we do things differently now...and why. A lot of hard work and intelligence went into the modern-day miracles and remedies we have now. Our scientists of tomorrow need to know that new products and new processes came only after years of suffering and hardship and trials that didn't work. A spirit of conservation and preservation requires that we appreciate those who came before and on whose shoulders we can see the future.

~~~~~  
"Weeds, Milk and Abe Lincoln", cont'd from page 3

**Bibliography**

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- Keys to the Flora of Oklahoma, by U. T. Waterfall  
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*Eupatorium rugosum, flowers*

By Dr. Paul Buck

In my last contribution to the *Gaillardia*, I admitted spending time in a bottomland forest searching for 'that special plant' to feature in the article, but then failing. I suspect the editor concluded I was simply not trying hard enough. You know, she may have been right.

When I get into the field I find myself overwhelmed by the profound spirit of Nature and am driven to locate a secluded place from which to observe the world around me and contemplate questions of life. It is comforting to settle at the base of a rock or tree or simply recline on the open ground and mull over questions of 'what' and 'why' and at the same time experience visions, sounds, scents, and the physical contacts of Nature. Chief Standing Bear, a Sioux, said "...to sit or lie upon the ground is to be able to think more deeply and feel more keenly ... see more clearly into the mysteries of life and come closer to kinship to other lives...".

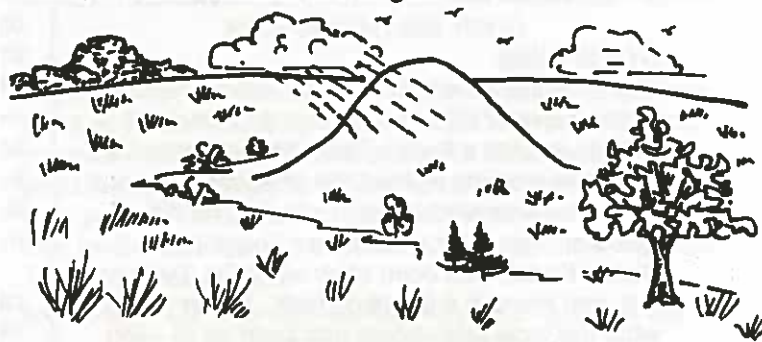
How does one translate these personal experiences into words? Most of us lack that talent and it is at this time the ability to communicate via the written word that is so important. When beautiful passages such as Standing Bear's come to mind I, once again, offer a sincere prayer of thanks to Mother for the hours spent at her side as she read to her children, cultivating our love of reading.

While surrounded by the tranquility of Nature I have watched the world about me and searched through the reaches of my mind for those special words appropriate for the experiences of the moment. Once a careless vole, caught momentarily away from the security of its burrow, had its life quickly snuffed out. The approach of the hawk was silent and it appeared the vole's first awareness may have been talons piercing its flesh. I had just witnessed the end of a life. But, what is life? Yes, we biologists have a detailed definition steeped in technical terminology but at that moment I found the final words of Crowfoot, a Blackfoot spokesman, more meaningful.

"What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the winter time. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the Sunset."

It has become impossible to walk across a hot, dry, Oklahoma prairie in August without reflecting on a passage from *The Way to Rainy Mountain* by N. Scott Momaday as he described part of a journey to the grave of his grandmother:

'A single knoll rises out of the plain in Oklahoma, north and west of the Wichita Range. For my people, the Kiowas, it is an old landmark, and they gave it the name Rainy Mountain. The hardest weather in the world is there. Winter brings blizzards, hot tomadic winds arise in the spring, and in summer the prairie is an anvil's edge. The grass turns brittle and brown, and it cracks beneath your feet. There are green belts along the rivers and creeks, linear groves of hickory and pecan, willow and witch hazel. At a distance in July or August the steaming foliage seems almost to writhe in fire. Great green and yellow grasshoppers are everywhere in the tall grass, popping up like corn to sting the flesh, and tortoises crawl about on the red earth, going nowhere in the plenty of time. Loneliness is an aspect of the land. All things in the plain are isolate; there is no confusion of objects in the eye, but one hill or one tree or one man. To look upon that landscape in the early morning, with the sun at your back, is to lose the sense of proportion. Your imagination comes to life, and this, you think, is where creation was begun.'



Some of my more gratifying experiences have involved finding an isolated spot on a ridge shortly before sunset and sitting quietly until the sun has disappeared below the horizon. Often it is difficult to willfully break the spell as Nature swiftly changes her face. With darkness the creatures of the day settle down, replaced by those of the night. During that magic transition, as the shadows creep toward me, I think of a small book of nature essays, *From the Stump*, by Bob Jennings of the Tulsa Oxley Nature Center and his interpretation of that moment:

'From the scrubby trees along the dry ridge, the first tentative notes of a whip-poor-will's song emerge. The bird will make a false start or two, checking to make sure the tone is just right, that the acoustics are perfect. Soon it will start the evening concert, unbroken strings of notes calling the shadows out of the woods and across the grassland, weaving night out of the remnants of shady places.'

You know, we of the Native Plant Society may be approaching our field activities wrong by scheduling them mid-day. That time has probably been selected for convenience, the dew is gone, insect activity low, the sun is high and flowers open. But perhaps we should get out in the early evening, botanize until near dusk and then close the day, as a group, with a silent, sunset vigil; an approach which might place each of us in closer harmony with Nature.

Chad Cox reports that he is almost ready to open the ONPS web page. The design is complete and he is working on links to interesting sites. When it is available, the address will be <http://www.telepath.com/chadcox/onps.html>, and we encourage all members to take advantage of this new member service. Chad's email address is [chadcox@telepath.com](mailto:chadcox@telepath.com).

Meanwhile, you might try these other native plant group sites: New Mexico NPS is <http://www.wazoo.com/~dkeenev/npsoc.html>, Washington State is <http://www.wnps.org/>, California NPS is at [http://www.calpoly.edu/~dchippin/cnps\\_main.html](http://www.calpoly.edu/~dchippin/cnps_main.html), and Oregon NPS is at <http://www.teleport.com/nonprofit/npsol/>.

### FLORA OF OKLAHOMA PROJECT

BY Pat Folley

Ruth asked me to bring you up-to-date on the Flora of Oklahoma Project. She must want to ask for a favor! The editorial committee has been working without the physical presence of our fearless leader Ron Tyrl while he did research for a year in London. Tough job....! Susan Barber has been chair while Dr. Tyrl was out, and found it a daunting task. Never wonder what the local work-horse has been up to —you don't want to know. We have all of the family descriptions and keys in pretty constant use over the state, being user-checked by college students. Most of the keys to the genera are ready for inclusion in the September edition.

For some families we have species keys and descriptions, for others only promises from the volunteer authors. It's terribly slow, but we have a quality product so far, and don't want to substitute quantity for that.

All work is done for 'love'—not money or even the promise of some. Three of our eight editorial board members are now retired, and of those, Paul Buck and Connie Taylor work as much as full-time writing. The "still working" members are Ron Tyrl, Senior Editor, Rahmona Thompson, Larry Magrath, James Estes and Susan Barber. All of us are members of ONPS. Your reporter is still measuring *Carex* parts, has accumulated a cabinet full of notes and 14 measly pages of text. Does anyone care whether Oklahoma has an original, fact-checked to the real stuff, key to the *Carices*? We do! Xerox copies of the production to date may be had from Susan Barber for about \$10 for just our part or \$20 for the new portion plus Waterfall's keys to the species. Prices are indefinite because we just sent some more pages to the

printer. Call Susan Barber at (405)521-5256 or Paul Buck at (918)743-3397 for ordering information and the latest price.

### Selmon Bat Caves

Field Trip Report by Wayne Chambers

On Friday evening, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 1998 members of the Central Chapter witnessed an awesome sight. "Awesome" is a word much overused today. In this case it was fitting, however. It is hard to find another word to describe the sight of a million bats against the summer sky. Other words heard that evening were "amazing" and "incredible".

To witness the bats emerging on cue at sunset as they have done for thousands of years, to hear the roar of millions of wings and feel the breeze generated by them on your skin, to smell the ammonia of the cave cannot be appreciated unless experienced personally. And being experienced cannot be fully understood.

It was as though we were strangers peering over the brink of eternity to glimpse some secret, timeless dance. Time seemed to stand still as we stared west into the fading rays of the sun, while the river of bats flowed from the cave east and south into the sea of darkness. As we peered above the canyon rim we could see others in the ballet of flight. Nighthawks dipped and darted in pursuit of insects. Kestrels dove into the stream of bats for prey. The larger silhouettes of a pair of owls could be seen landing on the gray-white rock outcroppings near a juniper tree.

After nightfall many of the pups remained near the cave to feed and we were able to view them with a night-vision scope that had been provided for us. Sometime after dark we were taken back to Alabaster Caverns State Park to pick up our vehicles and depart.

As Susan and I left the park we rolled down the windows of the truck and let it fill with the cool night air and the scent of sagebrush, watching the stars as we drove back to the twentieth century.

### NOTE OF THANKS

By Sue Armstutz

Regular readers of the *Gaillardia* often see references to our Photo Contest Posters being available for use by groups for display, including libraries, universities and garden clubs. But, did you know that one of the most successful areas of display for those contest posters has been in the Nature Centers of some of Oklahoma's State Parks?

Since the summer of 1992, sets of posters have been used for extended periods at Sequoyah State Park, Beavers' Bend State Park, Robbers' Cave State Park, Fountainhead State Park, Thunderbird State Park, Oxley Nature Center, and the Nature Center at the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.

ONPS thanks the naturalists at our parks for providing space for the display of these posters, and trusts that use of the posters with their lovely photos of Oklahoma native plants is providing a helpful service to the naturalists in their efforts to educate Oklahomans to the wonderful variety of flora our state is so fortunate to possess.

**FIELD TRIP REPORTS****1998 Orchid Tour a Success Despite Drouth**

by Pat Folley

Anticipating total ruin and devastation, Connie Taylor and I started out on Friday, August 7, to scout the Oklahoma orchid sites for possible flowers. It was hot and dry, and our best hope was to find a lakeshore that might have retained some moisture while the rains of May and June did not come. Along U.S. 70 there was nothing but dead, brittle grass and wilting trees, but as we pulled into the Baptist camp across from the Schooler Lake site, green trees beckoned from the shoreline. Entry into the wild area, though, was not encouraging: the ground was covered with dead, crunchy leaves as if it were November, and even the poison ivy was going dormant, the berries prominent among sparse leaves.

Connie ranged ahead while I looked at the sedges in the water's edge – about a meter farther out than usual. When she called "they're here", it seemed too good to be true, but there they were, the soft orange glowing in the shady woods. No mushrooms, one of the usual highlights of this traditional outing, and few ferns, but a few sturdy stems of *Platanthera ciliaris* gave hope of pleasing the visitors to come. Later, we visited the Battiest site, usually the most productive in terms of numbers of species, and found nothing green at all. This spot seems to be drier than others in the southeastern area, probably due to the spotty if-at-all rain pattern. No ferns, no sphagnum moss: nothing. On we went, toward The Nature Conservancy's Boehler Seeps and Sandhills preserve. Enroute, a tiny thundestorm drenched us with rain so heavy that we could hardly see to drive. That was near Antlers. Next day, we found that sites ten miles from Antlers were barely blessed with showers. So it goes, in Oklahoma summer!

At 9 a.m. on August 8, we met Jim Norman and the rest of the tour at Raymond Gary S. P. Twenty-six hardy souls signed in to go exploring, at least half of them there for the first time. Mr. & Mrs. E. J. Guerraut of Antlers brought their two young daughters, about 8 and 4 years old, who graced the day with their fine attitude and lively interest in the process. Wish I could tell you about all those who went along: meeting these folks is worth the time for the trip. First, of course, to Schooler Lake, where the brief shower had freshened things a bit, and a few more *Platanthera* had bloomed. Paul Koures found a nice stand of *Bartonia paniculata* in the edge of the lake. It was not blooming as is its habit for this date. Maybe delayed by the drouth? As always, more questions than answers attend our probing. Several of our tour

members also were treated to their first experience with "nits & lice", or *Hypericum drummondii*, a cute little yellow flower in the St. John's Wort family.

On to a rest-stop and lunch-shopping event in Ft. Towson, followed by a stop south of Idabel to see a really healthy population of the one native palmetto: *Sabal minor*. It was in fruit in a grazed pasture. Across the road, a surprise! Healthy vines of *Brunnichia ovata*, or ladies' ear-drop vine, covered a roadside fence. It was my first sight of a plant I knew only from herbarium specimens. Finally, we stopped at the little lake near Bokhoma for lunch, and more neat plants in the drying edges. A few hardy souls followed Connie and me to Boehler Seeps, where we found no sundews and the beaver pond down to thick gooey mud, but still full of flowers and other wonders. The strange, grasslike sedge *Dulichium arundinaceum* was blooming there. My trip meter read 828 miles when I reached home that night, and my eyes, camera and mind were full. Thank you Jim Norman, for a wonderful day!

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**RICH MOUNTAIN TOUR**

The statewide field trip to the Rich Mountain area will take place while the *Gaillardia* is between printer and mailbox, so you'll have to wait until next time to hear about all the good times you missed: unless, of course, you went, and then you might want to write the *Gaillardia* and put in your own rave notice about the wonders you saw there. Connie Taylor is the organizer.

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**FIELD TRIP RULES**

>Preregistration is required for all field trips.

>Field trip announcements will contain the name, address, and telephone number of the leader. If you have doubts about the terrain, difficulty, etc., ask.

>Field trips take place rain or shine. Hiking boots, long pants and a hat are essential.

>Bring water and lunch or a snack. Sunscreen and insect repellent are always in demand. Field guides, a camera and binoculars are nice.

>Participation is at your own risk.

>All ONPS field trips are open to the public at no charge, unless charges per-member are specified in the announcement. Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.

>Children old enough to keep up are welcome. Pets are not. Children should be warned against picking flowers or collecting animal or plant souvenirs: many of our field trip sites are havens for the rare and endangered.

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by Ruth Boyd

As-of press time, we still have not received a sample registration form. As soon as possible, we will send one to each member by **First Class Mail**. Because of the close approach of the actual date, I'd like to know, by phone at (405)872-9652 or by mail at 812 Jordan Drive, Noble OK 73068, that you plan to attend. The actual registration forms must be sent on to the address supplied by Texas Native Plant Society.

We do know that the meeting will take place in Amarillo, Texas, on October 15 through 18, with events centering on the Radisson Hotel, near the airport, which is on the east side of Amarillo. Lots of workshops, field trips, and other special events are planned: the brochure should have more details about these. We encourage all ONPS members to save these dates and plan to be there with us!

**BOARD MEETING**

By Ruth Boyd

The executive board of the ONPS met Saturday, June 27, 1998 at the Kirkpatrick Horticulture Center in OKC with 14 members present. The following are very abbreviated comments about the 3-hour meeting.

Judy Jordan's treasurer's report showed a balance in the Long Fund of \$9,525.57 and in the Barclay Fund of \$2,094.26. Both of these funds are in CDs and only the interest accrued is used to fund the annual awards. The balance in the operating fund was \$6,283.36.

New committee guidelines were approved for the Awards Committee. Previously, both the Ann W. Long Memorial Award and the Harriet G. Barclay Scholarship Award were administered by one committee. As criteria, prizes and method of bestowing the prizes are different, we now have two separate committees with Paul Buck as this year's chair of the Long Committee and Connie Taylor as the Barclay Committee chair.

As co-chair of the Conservation Committee, Leslie Cole-Jackson gave a report on the response to the conservation questionnaire that was an insert in the spring Gaillardia. Although the number of responses was low, suggestions were made and it now remains to set goals and hope for good response in recruiting volunteers to put these plans into action.

A membership report based upon the June 6, 1998 membership list showed total membership of 374 with 231 individuals, 126

families and 17 students. 128 (at press time, only 84) were paid only through '97, 230 through '98, 6 through '99, and there were 10 life members. From January through June 6 there were 35 new members but 71 members had been deleted before the spring newsletter was mailed because they had not paid dues since '96. Many move and fail to provide forwarding addresses, and others are no longer interested or we have disappointed them in some way.

Betty Kemm is investigating the possibility of holding the annual meeting in October 1999 at Arrowhead Lodge at Lake Eufaula.

Paul Reimer, Larry Magrath and Judy Jordan were appointed to an ad hoc committee to study insurance packages that might be more comprehensive than the one we currently have, without the price's being prohibitive.

New, more comprehensive guidelines for organization within chapters were approved. Previously the only guidelines for their operation were those approved for the two existing chapters when they made application for forming in 1989.

Tina Julich, current Chair of the Central Chapter, and its representative on the board, volunteered to look into replacing our current historical scrapbooks with something of better quality. After 12 years of use, the earliest ones are deteriorating.

Leslie Cole-Jackson will investigate prices for bumper stickers, litter bags and/or window decals as a possible inexpensive way to spread our fame.

Judy Jordan, who is coordinating our annual meeting this October in Amarillo, reported that we expect a registration form soon after the Texas NPS board meeting in late July. We should have them by early August and our mailing committee will make a special mailing to put them into the hands of our members at the earliest possible minute.

**WOODWISE HOMES**

Clipped from the *Woodwise Consumer*, a Co-op America publication.



> Did you know that a new home today is likely to have 4 bedrooms and a three-car garage? It will be almost twice as large as the average home in the 1960s but will house only two or three people instead of four.

> You can lighten the load on our forests by being WoodWise when you buy furniture, choose lumber for do-it-yourself projects, or hire a contractor for remodeling or renovation. The 3 labels displayed to the left of this column identify products made by companies that take care of forests, protect wildlife, and create long-term jobs for local people. The difference in cost is very slight.



**1999 Photo Contest**

Wow! Look at that string of nines in the title. It's enough to make a fellow wonder what the big 2000 will feel like.

The purpose of the photography contest is to encourage the study, protection, appreciation and use of Oklahoma's native plants. The contest works in two ways: first, the aspiring photographers have to go out and find a really beautiful natural wildflower event to photograph, and second, the posters made from each year's entries are kept on constant display all over the state. It's one of ONPS' major educational efforts. Beginners need not worry too much about trying to identify their subjects, though we do wish you would give us a "best guess".

An entry blank (blue) is enclosed with this issue of the Gaillardia for your convenience. We encourage members to copy and pass along the entry forms so that non-members can take part. It is important, though, to remember that the flowers (or trees – any native plant) in your pictures must be natives, not garden flowers.

p.s.: To schedule past contest photograph posters for display in a public place near you, contact Sue Amstutz at (918) 742-8374 or Ruth Boyd at (405) 872-9852.

**FRIENDS OF THE WICHITAS PHOTO CONTEST**

The *Friends of the Wichitas*, a support group for the Wichita Wildlife Reservation, also functions as a southwest-area chapter of the ONPS. (Anyone who doesn't understand that has never been an officer in an organization that uses volunteers on a state-wide basis.) Last year they held their own photo contest, and it must have been successful, because they are doing it again. As we haven't room to run the whole application, we'll just say that the deadline is 1 December 1998, the categories are 1) Native Plants, 2) Animals, and 3) Landscapes and Landmarks. Prints 4x6" to 5x7" will be accepted.

Contact Dr. Paul Reimer at 1105 Becontree Drive, Lawton OK 735-4001 / ph. (580) 536-5488 for entry blanks or more information.

**1997 Species List, Growing Native Wildflowers**

The Kansas Wildflower Society has issued another in their series of propagation and cultivation guides. I have found these to be helpful, easy to understand, and appealing as educational material. Issued in notebook form, each nearly-annual collection includes a mix of

common and not-so-common wildflowers. Contact Pat Folley at the Gaillardia address for a copy of the order form, or send \$7.80 for printing and shipping to Loma Harder / Dwight Platt, Kauffman Museum, Bethel College, N. Newton KS 67117.

**SNOW-ON-THE MOUNTAIN**

**Tough Plant for the Tough Seasons**

By Patricia Folley

If you've looked out the window or had a walk in the country this hot, hot late summer, you must have seen *Euphorbia marginata*, or snow-on-the-mountain. It's the bright green and white plant, about one meter tall, that stands alone in overgrazed pastures and along sunburnt roadsides. This year, it's the perkier plant going.



A member of the Euphorbiaceae, or spurge family, *E. marginata* is an annual herb, found in all parts of Oklahoma except the extreme SE counties, and often cultivated as a garden flower. Like the related Poinsettia, the showy color is produced by colored leaves, or bracts, that frame the tiny white and green flowers. The milky sap often leads students to call it a "milkweed", a member of an entirely different family. It survives in pastures because the milky sap is distasteful to grazing animals. In fact, the plant often causes a contact dermatitis similar to

that from poison ivy in susceptible individuals.

A friend who has lived in Oklahoma all her long life, and never forgot a detail, tells about an unlucky bride who chose pure-white Snow-on-the-Mountain for her bouquet and to decorate the church for the ceremony. Yes, she spent her wedding day wearing lovely cold compresses on her blistered and itching hands!

Many plants which contain irritating or poisonous compounds are used for medicinal purposes, but I can find no reference to such a use for our pretty subject. In fact, only one member of the spurge family ever found use as a medicine: the infamous source of castor oil! The source plant, *Ricinus communis*, is often grown in Oklahoma as an ornamental or to ward off gophers, but it is not native and will not persist on its own.

In the southeastern parts of Oklahoma, with overlapping ranges in south-central areas, a related plant with a similar appearance is *Euphorbia bicolor*, or Snow-on-the-Prairie. You can recognize it by its longer bracts, making the flowering heads wider and reflecting light in a different pattern. To see both species growing within the same few miles, try the countryside near Ada. With practice, you can pick them out from a moving car.

**NE Chapter Supports**  
**Sequoyah S.P. Nature Center**  
By Sue Amstutz

A 'passed hat' at the March meeting of the Northeast Chapter resulted in a special donation of \$135.00 for the soon-to-be-built new Nature Center at Sequoyah State Park.

Les Pulliam, Chief Naturalist at Sequoyah, has been one of ONPS' most loyal users of our photo contest posters, having displayed a set at his Three Forks Nature Center each summer since 1992. The 1997 set of posters is on display at the Sequoyah Nature Center this summer. It was Les who gave our Poster Curators, Ruth Boyd and Sue Amstutz, the idea of placing the posters in the state park nature centers as a way of exposing the photos to literally thousands of park visitors each summer, while at the same time getting our ONPS organization known to those same visitors.

In the spring of 1995, a support group was formed to volunteer services, promote park activities at Sequoyah State Park, and in general, provide for the various needs of the park and its staff. That organization became Sequoyah Park Partners. Among the very first concerns which the Park Partners addressed was the desperate need for the park's nature center to be upgraded. Plans went forward, and all members of the organization received a mailing listing a variety of items, which would be required to build, equip and furnish the new Center when completed. Included on that listing were plantings of native trees, shrubs and wildflower plots.

As a way of ONPS' expressing its appreciation to Les Pulliam for his enthusiastic willingness to display our photo contest posters annually, the Northeast Chapter felt that a contribution to the new Sequoyah Nature Center would be in order. It would let Les know how thrilled we are that his dream of a new center is about to come true and that we wanted to be a part of its fulfillment. Our collection of \$135.00, earmarked for the planting of new trees, wildflowers and native shrubs around the new nature center, was mailed to Les in March, with our best wishes and continued commitment to share in the development of the new center.

**NE MEETING NOTES**

by Betty Kemm

The May 4 meeting had a wonderful program about the new Mooser Creek Greenway Project, with 42 members present. Laureen Gilroy, Tulsa Public Works Department, and Corey

Williams, Tulsa County Conservation District, described the Mooser Creek watershed and its potential for the development of trails and parks with an environmentally friendly flood control system. The area is bordered on the east by the Arkansas River and on the north by I-44.

On June 2, fourteen members met at Redbud Valley Nature Preserve for a private tour by Donna Horton, Interpretive Naturalist for Oxley Nature Center.

Plans for fall are shaping up. The next Chapter meeting (and potluck supper) will be September 4 at 6:30, Tulsa Garden Center. New officers will be elected. The program will be brought by Bill Sartin of the Oklahoma Wildlife Department. His topic is the Wildlife Management areas in Osage County.

The fall field trip is a hike in the North Woods of Mohawk Park – a floodplain area on Bird Creek. Meet at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 20 where Mohawk Blvd. Meets the west side of the golf course. (North of 36N and Yale).

**CENTRAL CHAPTER ACTIVITIES**

By Tina Julich

Plans for the fall season are taking shape, with three evening lecture-fellowship-and plant/seed exchange opportunities on schedule. Thanks to the wonderful support of the OSU-OKC Kirkpatrick Horticulture Center at NW 4<sup>th</sup> and Portland, Oklahoma City, we can meet at the same place and time on the same monthly evening. That's the last Monday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Because the statewide field-trips take priority, we have scheduled none to take the place of the cancelled picnic we had previously announced for September 19. Plan now to save **September 28, October 26, and November 30** for those evening meetings. While arrangements for the September and November programs have not been completed, the October speaker can be announced: Dr. Brian Akers, new Professor of Ethnobotany at University of Oklahoma, will bring a slide-lecture program on **Ethnic Mycology**.

About plant exchanges: these are freely-shared, take-some-if-you-can use them affairs. No charge, and no need to "trade" yours for theirs. Our purpose is to provide native Oklahoma plant material to people who will give them a chance to grow in new territory. Please identify both seeds and plants so the adopting parties can give them reasonably good care. A card with the botanical and common names (if known), and a few words about the cultural requirements will help. Need envelopes for seeds? How about saving "junk mail" returns? Seeds should always be placed in paper, not plastic bags. Starts of small plants should be potted-up several days ahead of the meeting so they have a better chance to survive.

*Ed. Note: Wayne Chambers' ecstatic report on the Selmon Bat Cave field trip has been moved to page 6 so we wouldn't have to continue it on another page.*

**ONPS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS**

An official list of new members was not available by press time and the above list has been put together from various sources. If it is incomplete, it will be corrected in the next issue.

- Priscilla Callahan, Norman
- Mary Ecker, Oklahoma City
- Carl Grantz, Watson
- Karen Malnar, Owasso
- Jeme' McBride, Oklahoma City
- Norma Lynne Paschall, Ardmore
- Carl & Rose Mary Whisk, Stillwater
- Mazie Curry, Norman
- J. Carol Garrison, Norman
- Helen Hill, Tahlequah
- Nadine Mahoney, Tahlequah

Wow! What a lot of new faces to learn. If you know any of these good folks, invite them to attend a meeting or field trip with you. Make them welcome and hope they'll be happy they joined us.



**A word about addresses**

ONPS has a business address:

**Oklahoma Native Plant Society  
c/o Tulsa Garden Center  
2435 South Peoria  
Tulsa, OK 74114**

Membership, changes of address, and general correspondence of all kinds except newsletter material should be sent to the Tulsa address.

For *Gaillardia* material only, use the editor's address:

**Patricia Folley, Editor  
15100 Etowah Rd.  
Noble, OK 73068**

The *Gaillardia* can accept material by disk (ASCII, rtf or Word format), fax to (405)872-8361, or e-mail to [Onps@aol.com](mailto:Onps@aol.com)

Members who wish to receive information by e-mail from ONPS may send their on-line address to [onps@aol.com](mailto:onps@aol.com) and just say you want to be included in any notices.

Please renew my membership in the Oklahoma Native Plant Society, or add the name below to the membership list in the category checked.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

AFFILIATION (School, Business or Avocation) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ BUSINESS PHONE( ) \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  please don't list my phone

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_ \$10.00 Individual \_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 Student \_\_\_\_\_  Gift from \_\_\_\_\_

LIFE MEMBERSHIP \_\_\_\_\_ \$300.00 Family \_\_\_\_\_ or \$200.00 Individual.  Renewal  New Member

DONATION TO: ANNE LONG FUND \_\_\_\_\_ HARRIET BARCLAY FUND \_\_\_\_\_

I am enclosing an additional \$2.50 (to cover cost of printing and mailing) for a complete ONPS directory.

Please make checks payable to *Oklahoma Native Plant Society* and mail to:  
**Oklahoma Native Plant Society / 2435 South Peoria / Tulsa, OK 74114**

**The Gaillardia**

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|----------------|---------------|
| President      | Ruth Boyd     |
| Vice President | T. H. Milby   |
| Secretary      | Clare Miller  |
| Treasurer      | Judy Jordan   |
| Historian      | Karen Haworth |

Boardmembers-at-Large  
1998: Sheila Strawn and Betty Kemm  
1999: Lynn Allen and Sue Amstutz  
2000: Paul Reimer and Larry Magrath

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We don't want to lose you,

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**ILLUSTRATED FLORA  
OF NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS**

The long-awaited Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas, originally written by Shinnery and Mahler, has been completely rewritten and updated by Barney Lipscomb, George Diggs, and Robert O'Kennon. It includes treatments of all species of native and naturalized vascular plants known to occur in N. Central Texas – and a majority of those found in Oklahoma as well. There is a line drawing for each species and color photographs of 170 of them, with introductory information on the geology, soil, climate and human history. The book runs 1500 pages, and will be a welcome addition to any plant-lover's library.

Published jointly by the Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT) and the Austin College Center for Environmental Studies, the book will be released this fall. For ordering information, e-mail [sida@brit.org](mailto:sida@brit.org) or see the BRIT web site at <http://www.brit.org/sida/sbm>. The price with postage and handling is \$91.55.

**If you attended the Indoor Outing at Durant this spring, this is the book you saw featured in several presentations.**

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