

September 2007 Newsletter

Native Plant Society of Texas - South Texas Chapter



September 6th – Monthly Meeting – Guest Speaker Dr. John Fucik

Our monthly meeting will be Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greely Drive, Corpus Christi.

Dr. John Fucik will speak about plants mentioned in the Bible that are also native to South Texas. Feel free to come as early as 6:30 p.m. to visit with Ann and other members.

Chapter Updates

Renewed Memberships

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Ruth O'Brien of Corpus Christi
J. Naomi Linzer of Corpus Christi
Dawn Dickson of Corpus Christi
June Herbst of Corpus Christi
Fred Allon of Corpus Christi

Our Next Meeting is October 4th

**Grasses
with John Snowden**

New Membership

Welcome to our new member.

Christina Mild of Harlingen

7th annual Texas Plant Conservation Conference

The conference is scheduled for September 19-21 this year and will take place at the Wildflower Center in Austin. The focus of this year's conference is student research. Speakers will discuss their work with Texas rare plants and update participants on the status of their projects. Keynote speakers will include Kathryn Kennedy, Executive Director of the Center for Plant Conservation, and Camille Parmesan who, for the past several years, has focused on the impacts of climate change on wildlife in the 20th century. See (www.wildflower.org) for more information or call Flo Oxley, Program Coordinator at 512/292-4200 ext. 160 oxley@wildflower.org

October Grass meeting with John Snowden

John Snowden of Bluestem Nursery (www.bluestemnursery.com) in Arlington, TX will be our speaker in October. Some members have already placed orders for grasses. He does not plan to bring more grasses than are ordered. If you are interested, contact Ernie (ernie1@hughes.net) for the catalog and data sheet.

Rockport-Fulton 2007 Hummer/Bird Celebration

The celebration is scheduled for September 13th – 16th and will include talks by two NPSOT members, Dr. Alice Hempel and Bill Lindemann. Go to (www.rockporthummingbird.com) or contact the Rockport-Fulton Area Chamber of Commerce, 361-729-6445, for more information.

Fall NPSOT Symposium October 18th – 21st

NPSOT and Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPSAT) Symposium - The Blackland and Grand Prairies and Grasslands of the Edwards Plateau: Efforts to Identify, Restore, Conserve and Celebrate a Natural Treasure will be held in Georgetown, TX this fall. It is open to public. See (<http://npsot.org/symposium2007/>) for more details. All current NPSOT and NPAT members will receive a registration brochure via postal mail around September 1st. If you are not a current member of NPSOT or NPAT and wish to receive a registration packet for the 2007 Joint Symposium, please see (<http://npsot.org/symposium2007/home/registration.shtml>) to submit contact information via email or postal mail.

“Do You Know Your Natives???” Contributed by: USDA-NRCS Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center

Copper globemallow (*Sphaeralcea angustifolia* Gray) has a shrubby form, interesting grey-green leaves, and many brightly colored flowers which make it an attractive addition to any garden. The plant is easily cultivated, fairly hardy, and relatively drought tolerant. It is a native, perennial forb with a woody root. This erect plant has grayish-green leaves, can grow to three feet in height, and has orange or occasionally pink flowers. It is a member of the *Malvaceae* or mallow family, and flowers profusely throughout the warm-season.

There are three varieties of this species: *angustifolia* (sometimes called narrowleaf globe mallow), *cuspidata* (point-seed globe mallow), and *lobata*. According to Correll and Johnston (1996), the *angustifolia* variety tends to have more pinkish or lavender flowers and angulate leaves, while the *cuspidata* and *lobata* varieties have flowers with a more reddish-orange tone. The latter two varieties can be told apart by the leaves, with the *lobata* variety having broader, more deeply lobed leaves.

Copper globe mallow occurs from Kansas and Colorado, south to Texas and Arizona, and down into Mexico. The species as a whole is more predominant in western Texas, but is found in the Edwards Plateau and Rio Grande Plains regions as well. The easterly plants are likely of the *angustifolia* or *cuspidata* varieties. Copper globe mallow prefers sandy or rocky soils, and can be found along roadsides and in waste places. Its leaves are browsed by white-tailed deer.

Copper globemallow is best established from seed. Our attempt to root cuttings was not successful. A germination test conducted at the PMC showed that scarifying the seed for 5 seconds in a small sandpaper scarifier increased the germination from 2% to 74% in the greenhouse. The degree of scarification needed may vary with seed lot. You can seed directly or plant seeds in containers in a greenhouse, so plants can be transplanted later. Copper globemallow requires little management. Watering is recommended just after transplanting. Otherwise, the species is fairly hardy.

Similar Species

Lindheimer’s globemallow (*Sphaeralcea lindheimerii* Gray) is a native, perennial forb found only in South Texas. It can be found mostly on sandy soils in clearings along the Rio Grande Plains and on coastal prairies. It is also known as woolly globemallow for its densely pubescent leaves, which are covered with long, felt-like hairs. Its rosy, orange flowers are very showy and attractive. It flowers mostly from March to May and, more sparingly, to December.

Lindheimer’s globemallow also makes a beautiful ornamental plant for South Texas. This plant grows low to the ground and we have found it to be fairly drought tolerant. It tends to die back some under droughty conditions, but regrows quickly with a little rain. Follow establishment practices recommendations for that of Copper globemallow.

Info Sources: *Manual of the Vascular Plants of Texas* - Correll and Johnston; *Plants of the Texas Coastal Bend* - Lehman, O’Brien, & White; *Field Guide to the Broad-Leaved Herbaceous Plants of South Texas* – Everitt, Drawe, & Lonard; *Wildflowers of Texas* – Geyata Ajilvagi; and research performed at the PMC.



- **Sept. 8th** - Free **PROJECT LEARNING TREE** One-Day Teacher Short Course for elementary science and social studies teachers, K thru 8th grades, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Instructor is STBGNC Executive Director, Michael Womack, Ed.D. Pre-registration is required.
- **Sept. 10th** - "**Beginning Bird ID Series**," with acclaimed birder, naturalist and author Gene Blacklock of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, will be offered beginning Monday September 10. The series, which offers twelve class sessions, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Mondays, plus six field trips, continues through mid-December. Class maximum is 16. Tuition is \$150 for STBGNC members, \$175 non-members (includes one-year STBGNC membership); and must be prepaid by September 5. Fee includes Gardens & Nature Center admission.
- **Sept. 15th** - **Zen of Xeriscape Seminar** - Seminar students will learn to blend xeriscape principles with the latest Asian garden design, from 10 a.m. to noon. Dixie Oshman, owner of Garden Room Designs, will present information on plant materials and Asian landscape and hardscape design influence for creating attractive, relaxing outdoor areas. Seminar fees are \$6, \$3.50 members. For reservations, call 361/852-2100.
- **Sept. 22nd** - The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center and the Friends of the Corpus Christi Public Library present **The Garden of the Curandera**, a seminar on traditional Mexican-American herbal remedies, 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, at the Gardens & Nature Center Visitors Center. The seminar studies the book *Bless Me Ultima*, by Rudolpho Anaya, part of the National Endowment for the Arts' BIG READ campaign. Seminar admission is free, underwritten by the Friends of the Library and National Endowment for the Arts. For more information or reservations, call the Gardens & Nature Center, 361-852-2100.

NPSOT Calendar Fall 2007- Spring 2008

- **Sept. 6th** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker Dr. Fucik – Bible Plants Found in South Texas
- **Oct. 4th** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker John Snowden - Grasses
- **Oct. 18th - 21st** – NPSOT and NPSAT Joint Symposium
- **Nov. 1st** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker Shelly Maher – topic T.B.A.
- **Jan. 3rd** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.
- **Feb. 7th** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.
- **March 6th** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Dr. Alice Hempel – Sunflowers
- **April 3rd** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.
- **May 1st** - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.

Chapter Contacts

Ann Hoch (President) (361) 991-8063 ann777@grandecom.net	Shelly Maher (Newsletter) (361) 584-1486 shelly_maher@hotmail.com	Carolyn Chancellor (CCBG Native Garden) (361) 749-4461, clchancellor@charter.net	Dr. Alice Hempel (361) 593-3804 a-hempel@tamuk.edu	Ernie Edmundson (361) 729-3990 erniel@hughes.net
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