

January 2008 Newsletter

Native Plant Society of Texas - South Texas Chapter



January 3rd – Monthly Meeting – Guest Speaker Kris Kirkwood

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

Kris Kirkwood, Texas Master Naturalist, will present a program on invasive plants, "Plants That Run Amok." Kris is the Mid-Coast area coordinator for the Texas Invasives citizen science program of the Wildflower Center.

Chapter Updates

Renewed Memberships

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Cameron & Rick Pratt of Port Aransas
Shelly Maher of Bishop

Welcome Back

We hope you enjoyed the holidays!

Our Next Meeting is February 7th

Speaker TBA

Please Support the Garden Council

Our chapter is able to meet at the Garden Senior Center for free because we are a part of the Corpus Christi Garden Council – all we pay is \$20 a year. Therefore, each club needs to support the annual Garden Tour which is the Garden Council Fund raiser.

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



Big sacaton (*Sporobolus wrightii* Munro ex Scribn.) is a native, warm-season grass that forms dense clumps. It is a coarse, upright bunchgrass that can grow from 3 to 8 feet tall. Leaves can range from 1 to 2½ inches wide and can grow up to 1 foot long. The pale flowers of big sacaton form in stiff, upright clusters 1 to 2 feet long. Big sacaton grows primarily on heavier soils in lowland or wetland sites. It is tolerant of highly alkaline and saline soil, and can tolerate poorly drained soils and seasonally flooded areas. The plant is also found on open areas such as rocky slopes, plateaus, and mesas.

Big sacaton may be used in pure stands or as part of a rangeland seeding mix for highly alkaline soils. The plant is useful for revegetating saline soils throughout the Southwest and is a beneficial plant for erosion control conservation practices such as vegetative barriers or herbaceous wind barriers. Big sacaton is an effective alternative plant for stabilizing watershed structures and flood plain areas. Big sacaton is also useful for wildlife cover.

Falfurrias Germplasm big sacaton (PI-434453) was released by the Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center in 1989. The



Falfurrias Germplasm release of big sacaton was chosen because of its ability to produce abundant forage, especially on droughty, alkaline, and saline sites and its ability to produce nutritious, green forage throughout the winter months in South Texas. It was originally collected near Falfurrias, Texas.



Info Sources: *Manual of the Vascular Plants of Texas* - Correll and Johnston; *The Grasses of Texas* - Gould, 1975; *Grasses of the Texas Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes* - Hutch, Schuster & Drawe, 1999; *Manual of the Grasses of the United States*, 2nd Edition - Hitchcock, A.S., 1971; and research performed at the PMC.

SAVE THE DATE - 2008 Texas Plant Conservation Conference from Flo Oxley - Wildflower Center

The 2008 Texas Plant Conservation Conference has been scheduled for September 17-19, 2008. Our hosts in 2008 will be Texas A&M-Corpus Christi and Texas A&M-Kingsville. Thanks to Deb Overath and Alice Hempel! The conference will take place on the campus of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. More information to follow.



Upcoming Events (361) 852-2100 www.ccbotanicalgardens.org

- **Jan. 14th through May 3rd - Blacklock's Advanced Bird ID Series** with acclaimed birder, naturalist and author Gene Blacklock of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program. The series, which runs Jan 14 through May 3, offers twelve class sessions, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Mondays; plus six field trips. Blacklock's Beginning Bird ID Series, or similar prior birding experience is required. Series tuition is \$150 for STBGNC members, \$175 non-members. Prepayment must accompany registration.
- **Winter Lecture Series for residents and 'Winter Texans.'** Guest speakers will present unique perspectives on regional environmental, agricultural and horticultural topics from 10 to 11:30 a.m., Wednesday mornings. Cost is General Admission only & STBGNC members are free.
 - Jan. 16: Hints for Healthier House Plants Dr. Michael Womack
 - Jan. 23: Super Simple Orchids Sam Jones, STBGNC Orchid Curator
 - Jan. 30: Rediscovering Old Favorites: Antique Roses Corpus Christi Rose Society
 - Feb. 6: Harvesting Snake Venom TAMUK Natural Toxins Research Center
 - Feb. 13: Wetlands—More than Meets the Eye Jay Tarkington TAMUCC
 - Feb. 20: Tricks of the Trade & Home Remedies Frank Eicholz
 - Feb. 27: Must-Have Herbs Rockport Rose & Herb Study Group

NPSOT Calendar Fall 2007- Spring 2008

- **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

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State Web Site www.npsot.org