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The LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

NATIVE PLANTS IN THE HOME LANDSCAPE

by Steven E. Schutz
Assistant County Agent
La. Cooperative Extension Service

Utilizing native trees and shrubs in the home landscape provides many benefits. Generally, native trees are resistant, or at least tolerant, to disease and insect pests. Besides the pest tolerance, native trees are climate tolerant. Spruce, hemlocks, or northern hardwoods do not last too long in our climate. A third benefit is properly planned plant selection can provide habitat for native wildlife.

Native trees may be obtained by purchase, collecting seed, or by digging up a plant in the wild. Digging is not a preferred method for several reasons. First, most homeowners are not experienced in the proper procedures for digging. Secondly, dug plants generally do not survive as well as nursery tended stock. A third problem is that you need permission from the landowner (a fact overlooked by a high percentage of people). And the fourth argument against digging is the resultant habitat destruction.

Having stated the above, I am not totally against digging certain plants in the seedling stage. Easily transplanted seedlings include wild black cherry (Prunus serotina), southern red oak (Quercus falcata), live oak (Quercus virginicus), gray graybeard (Chionanthus virginicus), and carolina buckthorn (Rhamnus caroliniana). Some trees may be successfully started from seed.

For most plantings, you should consider obtaining nursery raised plants. Nursery stock will suffer less shock, will adapt quicker, and will be disease and insect pest free. Nursery stock can be ordered in several methods: balled and burlapped; container grown; and bare-root. Larger plants are usually balled and burlapped, while seedlings are bare-rooted. Container plants may be any size.

The key to success is proper site preparation. Ideally, each site should be prepared three to four weeks before trees are transplanted. Site dimensions depend on the size of the transplants. By far, the most often occurring mistake is preparing a deep, narrow hole instead of a broad, shallow hole. The broader the better. Tilling six foot by six foot plots as deep as possible for each transplant would virtually eliminate transplant failure. In fact, local commercial fruit producers (peaches, blackberries, blueberries, etc.) plow to depths of eighteen to twenty inches four to six months before transplanting bare-root trees. Not one tree of the over five hundred planted in the past two years has died.

After working the soil, purchase plants. Bare roots should be kept moist and out of the heat. Bare-rooted plants may have to be heeled-in if planting is delayed for a long period of time. When placing the tree, do not plant it deeper than it was in the container. When replacing soil, keep it firm to

remove air pockets (number one killer of bare-root plants). Use a mulch and build a small levee around the tree to hold water. Thoroughly water after transplanting.

Some final notes before you rush out to start your project. Bare-rooted plants should not be planted after mid-March. They can be potted and you should have some great transplants for February, 1986. Research at LSU has shown that eighteen inch bare-root seedlings will outgrow the four to five foot plus potted and burlapped plants in less than three years. Since seedlings are one fifth to one half the cost of potted plants, it makes sense to order them.

A few firms that deal in native plants include:

J.S. Akin (SASE)*
P.O. Box 6
Sibley, Louisiana 71073

Green Horizons
500 Thompson
Kerrville, Texas 78028

Magnolia & Odd Plant Catalog (\$2)
Louisiana Nursery
Route 7, Box 43
Opelousas, Louisiana 70570

Jack Price (SASE)*
Route 9, Box 6575
Shreveport, Louisiana 71009

Woodlanders (SASE)*
1128 Colleton Avenue
Aiken, South Carolina 29801

Salter Tree Farm (SASE)*
Route 2, Box 1332
Madison, Florida 32340

(SASE)* means to enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope for a list of plants and prices.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

Old magazines are frequently a good source of information on native plants. One such magazine is the Bulletin of the Louisiana Society for Horticultural Research. LSU at Baton Rouge has a good many of the old issues of this bulletin (I don't believe any more were published after 1976, though the Society is still in existence). Your local library should be able to get these for you if you request that they do so, as most local library systems in the state have loan agreements with the state universities. Some articles you may find interesting:

Bulletin No.	Year	Title	Author	Page Nos.
2	1957	The Native Atamascolily	Hunt	30 - 31
3	1958	Some Unusual Native Species of Ilex	Dorman	9 - 11
5	1960	Pinckneya Pubens	Dorman	31

If any members know of any other articles that may be of interest, write the editor so the information can be disseminated.

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Crataegus spathulata FOUND IN NEW ORLEANS EAST

In the Sunday, March 31, 1985, it was reported in the Times Picayune's "Greener Gardens" column (written by Rachel Daniel) that area horticulturist Dr. Severn Doughty had reported the discovery of Little-Hip Hawthorne, Crataegus spathulata, on a vacant strip of land off Chef Menteur Highway in New Orleans East.

This Hawthorn, which is widely distributed over the state, has apparently never been found in the New Orleans metropolitan area before. In "Natives Preferred", Caroline Dorman states "A much larger tree, C. Spathulata, also has very small red fruits, but they are rounded. It loves the banks of southern bayous, and its masses of brilliant red against gray Spanish Moss arrest the attention of observant winter tourists."

In "Manual of the Southeastern Flora", Small gives it as "Along streams and in rich moist soil, Coastal Plains and adj. provinces, Fla. to Tex. and Va."

ACADIANA CHAPTER NEWS

from Diane Bullard

On March 24, the ANPS visited Sam Houston Jones State Park in Lake Charles and the Laccasine Area. Some of the natives in bloom were Fringe Tree, Silverbells, Wild Azaleas, Spring Beauty, and Huckleberries. Indian Pink, in great abundance, was in the bud stage.

As of this writing, the ANPS has a trip planned to Grant Parish on April 13, 1985 to view Wild Azaleas and Big-Leaf Magnolias among many other spectacular natives in the area. The group will leave at 8:00 AM from the Acadiana Park entrance in Lafayette and will return at 5:00 PM. Also, a field trip to Briarwood is scheduled for May 4 to see the great variety of wild beauty there. We will meet at the Acadiana Park entrance in Lafayette at 8:00 AM.

In the way of general information, friends and family of John J. Lynch, noted conservationist and orchid specialist, are erecting a memorial to him in the form of Lynch's Botanical Gardens and Bird Sanctuary. The Gardens will include many Louisiana native plants. A retail area and museum will also contain native plants as well as exotics. Plans are for work to begin very soon. To volunteer your support and/or time to this wonderful project, contact Orchid Gardens, 107 Carmel Ave. Lafayette, Louisiana 70501.

Project Wildflower, an organized effort to promote a roadside wildflower program for Louisiana also needs your support and time. Many of the central committee members have had to pull out due to conflicts with other commitments. Consequently, positions need to be filled and statewide work is needed. Please contact the Lafayette Natural History Museum, 637 Girard Pk. Dr., Lafayette, Louisiana 70503, if you are interested in serving on the committee or working in some other capacity.

The American Horticultural Society is offering cash rewards of up to \$250 to organizations and individuals who find and document the existence of plants now feared extinct. The Rediscover Project coincides with the Society's publication of the 1985 Endangered Wildflower Calendar. A list of plants thought to be extinct in Louisiana is available through: Wildflower Rediscovery Project, AHS, P.O. Box 0105, Mount Vernon, Va. 22121. Send a SASE (37 cents postage).

A new book, Landscaping with Wildflowers and Native Plants, published by Ortho Books (c/o Chevron Chemical Co., 742 Bancroft Way, California, 94710)

is available for \$5.95. It offers a broad spectrum of general information about natural gardens. It discusses planting, maintenance, and propagation of native plants, and lists useful references and native plant sources. I have a copy, and enjoy it very much. I obtained mine at a garden supply shop.

Another new book, Wildflower Folklore by Laura Martin is available for \$16.95 from The East Woods Press, 429 East Blvd., Charlotte, N.C. 28203. It answers questions about superstitions, myths, and legends surrounding wildflowers, and how wildflowers got their names.

On the national front, Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas introduced a Senate Bill, the National Wildflower Landscaping Act of 1984, S. 2585, to the 1984 Congress. The bill became part of a highway funding bill, and despite the fact that there was no opposition to the legislation itself, the conference committee could not agree on a final form for the bill, so the wildflower legislation died along with the highway funding bill.

Senator Bentsen reintroduced the wildflower legislation again in the 1985 Congress earlier this year, and again it failed as it was attached to a federal highway bill. Happily, Senator Bentsen is not giving up, he plans to reintroduce the wildflower bill again in 1986!

The National Wildflower Landscaping Act is designed to set aside funds for the use of native wildflower seeds and seedlings in highway landscaping. Senator Bentsen pointed out the money savings that go along with wildflower plantings along highways.

To insure that Louisiana legislators know that there is an interest in this bill among the voters of our state, please write to Senator Bentsen as well as our senators and representatives. A letter at this time of the year as well as another at the end of 1985 may encourage our Congressmen to vote for this measure. Note the following addresses:

Senator Bentsen - Texas
Hart Bldg., Rm. 703
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Senators - Louisiana
Russell Long
J. Bennett Johnston
Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

U.S. Representatives - Louisiana
John Breaux
Robert Livingston
Mrs. Lindy Boggs
W.J. Tauzin
Buddy Roemer
W. Henson Moore
Jerry Huckaby
Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

LNPS SUMMER MEETING

The Summer Meeting of the Louisiana Native Plant Society has been tentatively scheduled for August 24, 1985 at the Acadiana Park Nature Station in Lafayette. More details will be mailed out in July, 1985.

CLARK CREEK TRIP

Members that went on the GNONPS Chapter's field trip to Clark Creek had a great time. The area had received almost 3 inches of rain the day before, so the trail was a little slippery, but the waterfalls more than made up for that inconvenience. Our next trip, to the area around Wiggins, Mississippi, is scheduled for May 25. Again we will leave from the north side of Lakeside Shopping Center (just outside D.H. Holmes) at 7:30 AM sharp. Guests are welcome!

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DEADLINE FOR SUMMER NEWSLETTER

The deadline for submitting articles, chapter information, plant requests, etc. for the Summer 1985 Newsletter is July 21. Please be sure and mail your correspondence a few days prior to that date so that it will arrive in time to be included!

UPDATE ON Amsonia ludoviciana : THE LOUISIANA BLUE STAR
by Annette Parker

The Louisiana Blue Star is a high priority species of the Natural Heritage Program. A collection of this species was made in southern Mississippi in 1926. Otherwise it is known only from central Louisiana. Dr. David Lemke, authority on Amsonia, recently spent some time in central Louisiana searching for this plant and found several new locations. I spent most of two days searching for Amsonia and found five additional localities. Most localities are near the intersection of the Vernon, Rapides and Natchitoches parish boundaries. The plant is presently known from these three parishes and Bienville parish. It is found in sunny openings in low woods. It can be easily spotted from automobile windows since it grows in open areas, has a terminal panicle of blue flowers, and has stems that are about 18 inches tall. This species can be confused with the common Blue Star, Amsonia tabernaemontana. Leaves of the Louisiana Blue Star are elliptic, about one inch wide, and densely pubescent beneath. Leaves of the common Blue Star are lanceolate, less than one-half inch wide, and lack pubescence beneath. Both species flower during April.

Any populations should be reported to the Natural Heritage Program. Please include detailed locality data. The plant could conceivably be found almost anywhere in the state in low, open areas. Botanists in Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi are aware of this species, but it has not been located in these states.

The address of the Natural Heritage Program is:

Annette Parker
Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
DNR/CMD
P.O. Box 44124
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

(Ed. Note: A "LOUISIANA RARE PLANT REPORTING FORM" will be included with this newsletter for those who need one.)

39th MEETING OF THE AHS FOCUSES ON USES OF NATIVE PLANTS
submitted by Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Geberlein

(Ed. Note: the following is an excerpt from Gardens For All, January, 1985.)

The American Horticultural Society focused its 39th Annual Meeting last

October on the uses of wild native plants.

Here are the practical, money-saving, work-saving uses they suggest for starters:

1) Highway departments can plant wildflowers instead of grass: no mowing to buy fuel or pay people for. Savings: millions of dollars.

2) Parks, homes, city centers in droughty areas can switch to native plants; many of the lovely flowers are naturally drought-resistant. Savings: money, water, and time.

3) Wild animals have lost millions of acres of habitat through highways and developments of all kinds. Wildflowers along roadsides and around suburban and rural service stations, motels, etc. can help birds and small animals survive. Savings: birds and animal life.

4) Many of our most useful medicines come from plants, as do special agricultural and industrial products from pesticides to oils. Little research is being done in this area. Potential savings: money, lives, crops.

5) Home gardeners love to plant flowers as well as fruits and vegetables. Too few have tried using wildflower plantings, but those who do, are enchanted by the beauty that rewards them, for very little effort. Savings: time, work, money.

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LOUISIANA RARE PLANT REPORTING FORM

Species: _____

Investigator: _____

Parish: _____

Date of visit: _____

Location: _____

Investigator's address: _____

Investigator's phone: _____

Landowner (if known): _____

Describe how to reach location: _____

Description of habitat and surroundings (word picture of location, community type, habitat size, slope, topography, moisture relationship, etc.): _____

Number of plants: _____ in area of what size: _____

Number: _____ in bud, _____ in flower, _____ in fruit,
_____ sterile or immature, _____ seedlings

Condition of plants: _____

Comments on types of land use or signs of disturbance: _____

Please include copy of a map if possible showing the exact location.
A photograph of the plant showing diagnostic features is useful.

Return to : Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
DNR/CMD
P. O. Box 44124
Baton Rouge, La. 70804
504-342-5052

(enter additional comments on back)