

April 2021

Volume 34, Issue 1



LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

LNPS NEWSLETTER



Inside this Issue:

The Kieffer-Tancock
Prairies, Winn Parish 1-6

“How we Turned a Con- 7-11
struction Site into a
Gold Level Habitat in
Less than One Year

Monarda and More 12-15

2021 Field Trips 16-17

LNPS Notices and 18
Correction

- 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

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies Winn Parish *by Dave Moore*

When one thinks of prairies our thoughts usually include the endless expanse of tall-grass prairies that defined the Midwest. Tens of millions of acres of grasslands, vast buffalo herds, prairie schooners, no trees – all found in a sea of grass falling away to the distant horizon. That was not the case in Louisiana.

In Louisiana there are two groups of prairies – the Cajun or coastal prairie and the more inland prairies, i.e. calcareous prairies, found in central and northern Louisiana, and some scattered through the Florida Parishes. For example, the town of Plains, Louisiana is probably named after the prairies in that area. Some of the larger historic prairies have familiar names

such as Avoyelles, Anacoco, Mer Rouge, Keiffer, Tancock, Pendarvis, Copenhagen, Tullos and Holloway.

In Louisiana these inland prairies were scattered across the landscape in disjunct pockets – not as one large, continuous prairie as that of the Cajun prairies, or those in the Midwest years ago. Taken together



Figure 1. A high-quality prairie with spikes of Indian Grass evident in the foreground.

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies cont.

they would have totaled around 40-50,000 acres, but most were 10 to 100 acres in size. The largest was around five square miles. Today less than one percent of these prairies remain, and some of the best examples can be found in the Keiffer-Tancock Prairie complex on the Winn Ranger District of the Kisatchie National Forest.

The Keiffer-Tancock Prairie complex occurs on surficial exposures of ancient marine sediments that are around 46 million years old. These sediments are derived from countless fossilized sea creatures such as echinoderms, corals, mollusks, crabs, etc. In a few places these fossils can still be found. This geologic formation has been exposed through erosion over long periods of time. The theory of Island Biogeography is applicable here. That is, think of them as islands of calcareous grasslands

on high pH, clay soils surrounded by a sea of low pH, acid sandy pine woodlands.

The flora endemic to these prairies has evolved over millennia and due to the nature of the exposed soils have remained relatively stable through time. Most have managed to stave off the inevitable encroachment of the surrounding calcareous woodlands, Eastern red cedar thickets, and pine forests. As with the associated calcareous forests, calcareous prairies have primarily been lost due to land use changes. Conversion to agriculture (many prairies have been planted to cotton or sweet potatoes) and changes resulting from fire suppression, represent the greatest losses.

Today the Keiffer-Tancock Prairie complex is comprised of 76 prairies stretching in an arc from NE of

Calvin, LA west and south to around the Couley Baptist Church on U.S. Hwy 84 between Clarence and Winnfield. The size varies from around 10 acres to less than 0.1 acre. Together the Keiffer-Tancock Prairies provide habitat for 20 percent of the rare plant species on the Kisatchie National Forest. Some of the best quality prairies support a diverse flora of around 120 species and usually include the “big-three” of prairies grasses; switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*), and Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) (Figures 1 and 2). There are also a few rare grasses in the mix, which are June grass (*Coeleria macrantha*) and Wiry panic grass (*Panicum flexile*). And present in almost all prairies is small-toothed sedge (*Carex microdonta*).



Figure 2. A typical prairie

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies cont.

Other prairies are notably depauperate and are in their last dying stages before they are consumed by the surrounding forest. Still others are little more than cedar thickets with moss and a few prairie species just barely hanging on (Figure 3). Often the last plants present before the prairie is extirpated are False Gromwell (*Onosmodium tuberosum*), Wild Bergamont (*Monarda fistulosa*) and Lyre-leaved Sage (*Salvia lyrata*).



Figure 3. Vestigial prairie surrounded by encroaching cedars.

Since the Kieffer-Tancock Prairies in Winn Parish represent some of the best of the last prairies in Louisiana, they became part of the Louisiana Natural Areas Registry in 2012 (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Secretary Barham presents Forest Supervisor Michael Balboni with the Registry Natural Area certificate.

Wildflowers bloom on the Kieffer-Tancock Prairies from early March through December but are especially colorful and abundant in the spring and fall, or in years after a controlled burn.

Forbs dominate the prairies from March to May. Among the many wildflowers that can be seen in spring are pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), prairie bluet (*Houstonia purpurea* var. *calycosa*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium* spp.), wild verbenas (*Glandularia canadensis*), prairie parsley (*Polytaenia nuttallii*), winecup (*Callirhoe papaver*), downy phlox (*Phlox pilosa*), and black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*).

In fall, from late September to November, both grasses and forbs are abundant. Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), and Indiangrass (*Sorghastrum nutans*) are the most common grasses. Many of the fall herbs are composites and include goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.), flat-topped goldenrod (*Oligoneuron rigidum*), Missouri ironweed (*Vernonia missurica*), blazing stars (*Liatris* spp.), tall sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), asters (*Symphyotrichum* spp. and *Eurybia* spp.), and western ragweed (*Ambrosia psilostachya*).

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies cont.



Prairie Pleatleaf (*Nemastylis geminiflora*).



Snow-on-the-prairie



Carolina larkspur (*Delphinium carolinianum*).



Ground Plum (*Astragalus crassicaarpus* var.



Carolina Wild Rosa (*Rosa carolina*).



Prairie Bluets (*Houstonia purpurpea* var. *calycosa*).

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies cont.

History

History

The prairies were commonly used during the 1800s by settlers and travelers as locations to rest and fatten their horses and livestock, and some prairies were associated with homesteads that were sometimes called “blackland places” in reference to the dark-colored soil common on some of these prairies.

The history of the area is significant. The Natchez Trace did not end at Natchez, MS but continued west to Natchitoches, where it joined the El Camino Real. The El Camino Real went west to San Antonio and on to Mexico. This road, known variously as the Natchez Trace - El Camino Real road or the Camino Real - Natchez - Natchitoches road, or even the Natchez Trace - Har-

risonburg road, was the first road to pass east-west through central Louisiana. Its route seems to have passed directly through Tancock Prairie. This is logical, since the prairie would have made an excellent camp, and would have afforded grazing for horses and cattle. A part of the original road can still be seen in areas around the Tancock Prairies west of Packton, Louisiana (Figure 5).

In the years just prior to and during the Texas revolt for independence, many hundreds of Americans rushed to Texas to join in their fight for freedom from Mexico, and the Natchez Trace-El Camino Real was the overland route by which hundreds of these people made their way to Texas.



Figure 5. Original Natchez Trace/El Camino Real roadbed near Packton, Louisiana.

The Kieffer-Tancock Prairies cont.

History

Carrying them on an almost due-west course, it was the fastest overland way for the volunteers to get into the battle. One narrative of this time told of a contingent of about 150 men from Georgia in 1836, marching over the Camino Real across Winn Parish to join the Texas army of Sam Houston. According to the story, these Georgia volunteers were carrying the first Lone Star Flag of Texas, designed by Joanna Troutman of Crawford County, Georgia, who helped recruit these men.

This group of volunteers camped one night at Tancock's (Albright) Prairie in what is now southern Winn Parish, where apparently most of the American settlers were from Georgia. Their Lone star Flag bearer found shelter for himself and their flag in the home of John B. Crawford. The story of Georgia Battalion is told in the 'Handbook of Texas.' Herbert Davenport listed the companies, but it is not known just which of the units camped that night at Tancock's Prairie. Still, it is interesting to note that the Lone Star Flag of Texas traveled the Natchez Trace-El Camino Real and that most of the men, probably not more than six weeks later, were killed in the Goliad Massacre.

Another settlement which grew up along the Natchez Trace-El Camino Real was Albright's Prairie or Tancock's Prairie, as it was first called. When the United

States government had the boundaries of township nine north, range three west surveyed, one of the civil engineers in the party was named Tancock. He was from Georgia. Apparently, the prairie was first named after him.

The first post office at Tancock's Prairie was established on August 31, 1852, the second oldest in Winn parish. It continued to operate until October 4, 1858. The first postmaster was Robert Rogers. He was followed by James Gray, who was appointed on December 7, 1854, and served until its discontinuation. According to post office records, it was located at the intersection of the Harrisonburg Road and the Alexandria-Claiborne military Road.

Although most of the Kieffer Prairie openings are not easy to find because they are surrounded by dense woodland, several occur along roads or trails and are relatively accessible. Coldwater Road Prairie and one of the Carpenter Road Prairies straddle well-developed roads. Gum Springs Horse Trail can be used to access a number of other prairies including more of the Carpenter Road Prairies, the Little Rock Creek and Long Prairies, and the Milam Branch Prairies.

Directions

Directions to specific prairies openings are best obtained from the Winn Ranger District office west of Winnfield on US Hwy 84. Office hours are 7:30 am to 4:00 pm M-F except on holidays. The address and phone number are as follows:

Winn Ranger District 9671 U.S.
Hwy 84 West Winnfield, LA
71483 (318) 628-4664.

David Moore is the Forest Botanist for Kisatchie National Forest at the Headquarters in Pineville, LA.

PS. A field trip to the Kieffer-Tancock prairies is planned this summer but the date has not been set. We will keep you posted.

“How We Turned a Barren Construction Site Into A Gold Level Habitat In Less Than One Year”

By Tracey Banowetz

Background

Our interest in using native plants in our landscaping began over 25 years ago as two of our hobbies - gardening and birdwatching - intertwined. For Dave, reading Noah's Garden by Sara Stein was like reading Doug Tallamy's Bringing Nature Home is for many more recently. It showed how we could enjoy both hobbies in a way that also supported our more fundamental interests in nature and conservation.

Our first attempt at gardening with native plants was in conjunction with the construction of a new home in a Baton Rouge subdivision in 1995. We outgrew that space within five years and acquired 26 acres in the Tunica Hills north of St. Francisville. We enjoyed almost 20 years of fun in the woods before facing the fact that it was time to downsize. Which brings us to the start of the present-day story.

Initially, the concept of downsizing was depressing as we struggled with the thought of trying to shrink what we had in terms of both home and garden. What to keep? What to get rid of? And how? We needed a vision! We found it at an exhibit at the West Baton Rouge museum on the interior design concepts of Frank Lloyd Wright. Dave and I walked out of the exhibit, looked at each other, and said “That's it! We keep nothing and go in a completely different direction.”

This meant swapping a 160 year old historic home and most of its contents for a small but intensely functional space based on the principles of Wright's usonian (Wright's own term for America in general) designs. But the characteristics of organic architecture - “creating harmony between human habitation and the natural world” - also provided an exciting step forward in our continuing interest in gardening with native plants.

So now we had to find a homesite. We looked for property on the New Orleans north shore in order to be closer to both of our mothers who still live in the area. We chose a 3/4 acre lot in the Money Hill subdivision in Abita Springs. We were attracted to Money Hill because of the conservation ethics expressed by the Good-year family as well as their association with The Nature Conservancy. We chose our lot based on its gradual elevation change and the fact that it backed up to a small lake and a large common area with lots of space and lovely views. We knew our architect could help us do something really cool with the site.

Design Goals for the Home and Garden

In keeping with the principles of organic architecture, we wanted the construction of the home to be “dirt neutral.” In other words, we wanted as little fill and as little excavation as possible, despite the fact that the lot had a strong declining slope from

front to back. The result was a split-level open u-shape home that melded into the existing topography. Pale green brick would further help the house blend in to its surroundings.

The changing elevation across the property created both challenges and opportunities. Managing the drainage in a sensitive way would be a challenge and for this we collaborated with Philip Moser Associates and installed a series of French drains and dry stream beds. A low retaining wall at the rear of the main garden in the front yard was added to retain both soil and soil moisture in this bed. Terraced steps in the rear compliment the geometry of the house, creating garden and lawn spaces that absorb water runoff from the roof. This also allowed us to preserve and protect a large longleaf pine in the backyard by avoiding any significant fill in its root zone.

Different elevations and exposures on the site offered us the opportunity to create three main habitat areas. The higher and sunnier front yard became the upland pine savannah; the lower, wetter north-eastern corner became the lowland pine savannah or “flatwoods garden,” and the shadier west side became the woodland garden. (We ultimately purchased the lot to the west of our's in order to preserve the trees and are slowly adding shrubs and perennials to the understory.)

“How We Turned a Barren Construction Site Into A Gold Level Habitat In Less Than One Year” cont.

We were required to present a landscape plan to the Money Hill HOA prior to constructing our home. At the time we did this, the committee was primarily concerned with tree preservation and had some detailed requirements regarding the minimum number of trees you were required to have for each zone of your property. This was not a difficult target for us to meet and our initial plan was readily accepted. While the plan included a large planting area in the front yard for the upland pine savannah, there was also a generous amount of turf, which probably helped facilitate the approval. That said, current guidelines call for a minimum of 20% turf area in the front yard, so we have the opportunity to expand this garden as we learn more about what plants are most successful in this area. Thus far, the only “push back” we have received from the HOA was that it took longer than the required three months from move-in to install the garden.

Plant Selection

When it came to selecting specific plants for the gardens, we wanted to focus primarily on the use of indigenous native plant material common to the longleaf pine ecosystem that was original to the Money Hill area. Lucky for us, our best friends are Rick and Susan Webb who own the fabulous Louisiana Growers Nursery in nearby Amite. Having held my landscape horticulture license

since 2002, we had easy access to some wonderful plant material, including lots of special selections that Rick has made from St. Tammany, Washington, and Tangipahoa parishes.

We also put into practice some of the principles we had recently learned from Claudia West and Piet Ouldolf. We sought to use native grasses and perennials in relatively dense masses. Perennials were selected with an eye towards attracting birds, butterflies, and other pollinators. Many of our perennials came from Louisiana Growers, but we also discovered the great selection of perennials available as “landscape plugs” from Northcreek Nursery in Pennsylvania. Again, having my professional license allowed us access to this source of plant material. Using large quantities of smaller plants allowed us to achieve masses of plants quickly and economically.

Specific Plant Materials

While we focused on masses of perennials, we also opted for diversity in terms of both the woody and perennial selections. Having the three different habitats guided our selection process and accentuated this diversity. What follows is a list of some of the plant material in each of the three habitat gardens.

Upland Pine Savannah: This garden is in the front yard, receiving full sun with a southern exposure. The property slopes gently from the street down towards the house.

Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Yellow False Indigo (*Baptisia sphaerocarpa*), Rattlesnake Master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), Coral Bean (*Erythrina herbacea*), Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), Blue Arrow Rush (*Juncus inflexus*), Prairie Blazing Star (*Liatris pycnostachya*), Dense Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), Scarlet Beebalm (*Monarda didyma*), Peter’s Purple Bee Balm (*Monarda fistulosa* × *barlettii*), Spotted Beebalm (*Monarda punctata*), Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Shortleaf Pine (*Pinus echinata*), Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*), Prairie Coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), Orange Coneflower (*Rudbeckia hirta*), Giant Coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), Pineywoods Dropseed (*Sporobolus juncens*), Stokes Aster (*Stokesia laevis*), Tree Huckleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*).

Lowland Pine Savannah:

This garden is in the rear north-eastern corner of the property. It has significant elevation change across its area, staying drier at the top and much more damp at the rear.

Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), Giant Coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), Whorled Milkweed (*Asclepias verticillata*), American Hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*), Button Bush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), Spiderlily (*Hymenocallis liriosme*), Dahoon Holly (*Ilex cassine*), Virginia Sweetspire (*Itea virginica*), Virginia Saltmarsh Mallow

“How We Turned a Barren Construction Site Into A Gold Level Habitat In Less Than One Year” cont.

(*Kosteletzkya virginica*), Fetterbush (*Lyonia lucida*), Southern Wax Myrtle (*Myrica (Morella?) cerifera*), Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*), Swamp Azalea (*Rhododendron serrulatum*), Florida Azalea (*Rhododendron austrinum*), Little Bluestem Grass (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*), Elliott's Blueberry (*Vaccinium elliotii*).

Woodland: The woodland habitat stretches along the western side of the home, extending into the back yard area. It is bordered by the wooded lot next door which we bought half-way into the construction process in order to preserve the trees.

Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*), Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Crinum Lily (*Crinum americanum*), Dixie Wood Fern (*Dryopteris australis*), Southern Wood Fern (*Dryopteris ludoviciana*), Bigtop Lovegrass (*Eragrostis birsuta*), Beeblossom (*Gaura lindheimeri*), Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), Sweetbay Magnolia (*M. virginiana var. australis*), Sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*), Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Obediant Plant 'Miss Manners' (*Physostegia virginiana*), Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*), Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*), Florida Azalea (*Rhododendron austrinum*), Piedmont Azalea (*Rhododendron canescens*), Dwarf Palmetto (*Sabal minor*), Autumn Sage (*Salvia greggii*), Blue eyed

Grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*), Indian Pink (*Spigelia marilandica*), Stokes Aster (*Stokesia laevis*).

Elsewhere on the property:

There are several other smaller beds on the site, including foundation beds across the front of the home, and additional trees dotted about.

Beeblossom (*Gaura lindheimeri*), Virginia Sweetspire (*Itea virginica*), White Muhly Grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*), Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica var. sylvatica*), Beardtongue (*Penstemon digitalis*), Correll's False Dragonhead (*Physostegia correllii*), Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*), Mexican Plum (*Prunus mexicana*), Water Oak (*Quercus nigra*), Nuttall Oak (*Quercus nuttallii*), Needle Palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*), Blue eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*), Wrinkleleaf Goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*), Pond Cypress (*Taxodium distichum var. nutans*).

Bog Planter: I have long had a passion for collecting carnivorous plants and we designed a planter at the front entrance of the home to hold these.

Thread-leaved Sundew (*Drosera filiformis var. tracyi*), Spoon-leaved Sundew (*Drosera spatulata*), Starrush Whitetop (*Rhynchospora colorata*), Pale Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia alata*), Yellow Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia flava*), White Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia leucophylla*), Parrot Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia psittacina*), Purple Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia purpurea*),

Catesby's Pitcher Plant (*Saracenia x. catesbaei*).

Other Perennials: There are some non-native perennials that we just can't live without and find particularly attractive to hummingbirds and butterflies. These have been included in other planters and beds around the home: Cigar Flower (*Cuphea ignea*), Shrimp Plant (*Justicia brandegeana*), Lantana sp. 'New Gold.'

Lot Next Door: As mentioned earlier, about half-way through construction, we had the opportunity to purchase the lot to the west of ours. We have begun to introduce more native trees, shrubs, and perennials into the understory. The list below includes both pre-existing and recently planted species.

Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*), Green Milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*), American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*), Joe Pye Weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*), Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*), Sweetbay Magnolia (*M. virginiana var. australis*), Southern Wax Myrtle (*Myrica (Morella?) cerifera*), Black Gum (*Nyssa sylvatica var. sylvatica*), Longleaf Pine (*Pinus palustris*), Loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*), Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Common Hoptree (*Ptelea trifoliata*), Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*), Winged Sumac (*Rhus copallinum*), Giant Coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), Lyre Leaf Sage

“How We Turned a Barren Construction Site Into A Gold Level Habitat In Less Than One Year” cont.

(*Salvia lyrata*), Tree Huckleberry (*Vaccinium arboreum*).

Outcome and Reception

As of this writing, it has been a little over twelve months since we installed most of the woody plant material. Perennials have just gone through their first winter and, for the most part, appear to have survived the recent cold snap. We are curious to see what Spring will bring. Our biggest challenge has been having to deal with the poor quality garden soil that was brought in to build some of the landscape beds. We've had to apply a lot more fertilizer than we'd like in order to lower the soil pH and improve fertility.

Overall though, the first year has been very rewarding. The abundance of milkweed brought lots of monarchs and countless caterpillars and chrysalis. Numerous other swallowtails, skippers, dragonflies, bees, and other pollinators have been spotted as well. Turtles come up from the nearby lake to lay their eggs in the garden which is fine with us. Various species of woodpeckers, flycatchers, warblers, and other songbirds have been spotted. We've had at least three different hummingbird species overwinter in the garden too.

The pandemic has prevented us from socializing much, so I can't report on how the garden has been received beyond our imme-

diate neighbors. Our next-door neighbor is an equally avid gardener with a completely different style, but she loves it and is always curious about what we are doing. Her granddaughter has even brought a chrysalis and a pitcher plant from our garden to show-and-tell! The young family across the street has expressed positive curiosity as well and recently inquired about our Certified Habitat sign.

I have to admit that I laughed when, in the middle of the admittedly drawn out process of initial installation, a member of the HOA committee asked when we would be finished. “Never!” We recognize that our garden will never be finished. It will always be evolving. As we learn from our successes and failures, we will

probably reduce the turf and expand the garden in the front yard. We plan to “gently manage” the side lot by continuing to add appropriate trees, shrubs, and perennials to the understory. We look forward to enjoying our garden and its critters for many years to come!

Tracey Banowetz is a longtime native plant enthusiast in Abita Springs.



Abita home prior to landscaping.

“How We Turned a Barren Construction Site Into A Gold Level Habitat In Less Than One Year” cont.



Tracey and Dave Banowetz photographed with the Louisiana Certified Habitat (gold) sign.

Monarda and More

Nine fantastic native plants with nine gardeners' favorite picks

By *Linda Barber Auld, NOLA BugLady*



Wild Bergamot
Monarda fistulosa



Spotted Bee Balm
Monarda punctata



Jacob Cline Bee Balm
Monarda didyma



Clustered Mountain Mint
Pycnanthemum muticum



Slender Mountain Mint
Pycnanthemum tenuifolium



Whiteleaf Mountain Mint
Pycnanthemum albescens



Phlox: Robert Poore
Phlox paniculata



Phlox: John Fanick
Phlox paniculata



Woodland Phlox
Phlox divaricata

Attention, Pollinators! Dinner is served!

Nine fantastic native plants with nine gardeners' favorite picks cont.

Baumgarten, Tammany - Horticulturist and Owner of BaumGardens Landscape & Design, Master Gardener and current President of the Native Plant Initiative of GNO

I have always been terribly fond of *Monarda punctata*, which I learned and grew years ago as one of my first natives. I knew it as Horse-mint, another common name for this plant. The leaf-like bracts that form the colorful parts of this plant are just so beautiful and interesting, very different looking. They seem pretty versatile in any well drained, sun to part shade garden, but don't seem to persist more than a few years for me. Of course 'Jacob Cline' is such a rich red color, it's hard not to love and don't even get me started on the Phloxes which bloom for such a long period of time and are such butterfly favorites! Good thing I can have them all!

Biundo, Mary,- La Master Gardener, Project Chairman, New Orleans Botanic Garden's Butterfly Garden at City Park, Louisiana Certified Habitat Garden in Metairie

I have two favorites on this list, *Pycnanthemum albescens* and *Phlox divaricata*, and if I have to pick one, it would be *Phlox divaricata*. The butterflies like it, as do the hummingbirds and bees. It

is attractive, fragrant and makes a nice edging and/or ground cover. *Pycnanthemum albescens*, a close second, is a lovely part shade plant with a silvery leaf and minty aroma, also attractive to pollinators. There is a lovely one in the Shade Garden at the New Orleans Botanical Garden.

D'mello, Dionne - New Orleans Botanical Garden: Pelican Greenhouse Manager

My favorite of these nine native plants is the Louisiana Phlox or *Phlox divaricata*. The lovely blue flowers tell us spring has sprung as they are one of the first to bloom every year. The blooms are slightly fragrant, long lasting for a perennial, and attract butterflies, hooray! This is one of the most carefree plants I have ever grown. Besides perhaps an annual shearing if you like a tight and tidy garden, they require no pruning, pinching, or deadheading. And I have never had to treat LA phlox for any pest or disease at Pelican Greenhouse. Plant this butterfly-friendly, reliable, native ground cover under deciduous trees in the landscape, in a woodland garden, or in any garden bed that gets some shade in the summer. To top it all off, Louisiana Phlox is

easy to propagate by division or cuttings taken almost any time of year!

Elliott, Mary - Fronderosa Nursery - Owner

I think my favorite is *Monarda fistulosa*. It is one of the first bee balms to bloom, is attractive to pollinators and hummingbirds, easy to grow, and also edible for humans. You can use the blossoms (pull the petals from the heads) for garnishes and salads, the leaves for tea, and the plant as a potherb. Native Americans used it medicinally. It seems to like full sun and a drier site than some of the other monarda species.

Graham, Amy - Longue Vue house & Garden - Director of Horticulture-

www.Longuevue.com

Monarda fistulosa, or bee balm, is a dramatic, aromatic, dependable addition to your pollinator garden! Multiple light purple crown-shaped bloom clusters of this plant open throughout the day, providing a cycle of nectar for butterflies, many species of bees, hummingbirds and even sphinx moths. Look for tiny holes in the side of the flowers which were made by short-tongued bees, to allow them-

Attention, Pollinators! Dinner is served!

Nine fantastic native plants with nine gardeners' favorite picks cont.

selves and other small insects access the nectar, amazing!

Monarda will thrive in various well-drained soils and full sun. Give your bee balm space to breathe to prevent powdery mildew from forming and leave the spent flowers to go to seed for the little sparrows. Please visit Longue Vue House and Gardens to see this plant in action.

Hopkins, Lees - Delta Flora Nursery - Owner

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium. I'm a big fan of Slender Mountain Mint for use in urban landscapes. It's a hardy, low-growing shrub with a lovely texture and scent. The abundant, long-lasting little blooms entice many insect pollinators.

Howard, Nell - Current Vice-President of the Native Plant Initiative of GNO, Louisiana Master Gardener, MGGNO Urban Natives Project Leader and native plant grower, LA Certified 'Gold level' Habitat Garden in New Orleans

Phlox divaricata is a favorite because I'm always looking for ways to put color in the shade of a live oak or a gathering of magnolias. Anything with the name 'woodland' evokes a serene, cool feeling, and this dainty perennial

never fails to perform. Spring has sprung when these little blue flowers erupt, lightly scented, and the more the merrier – which happens every year when they send out more shoots. They make a nice ground cover under an adjacent *Chionanthus virginicus*, (Native fringe, an understory tree), surrounded by *Tradescantia bracteata* (spiderwort) and *Phyla nodiflora* (frogfruit). Swallowtail butterflies and bees are constantly hovering over the spring-time blooms. I'm glad I used my own front yard as a test garden for these years ago!

Russell, Jim - LA Certified Habitat Garden in Mandeville - "Gold" level, LA Master Naturalist, LA Master Gardener

Pycnanthemum muticum and *P. albescens*. They take care of themselves, smell great, have culinary and medical uses, and attract huge numbers of solitary, native pollinators. I've seen *P. albescens* in the wild in Northlake Nature Center and off Hwy 190 in southern Covington area.

Last but not least! Auld, Linda - Owner Barber Laboratories Pest Control Supplies store, LA Certified Habitat Garden "Gold" level and Monarch WayStation in Harahan, plus NOLA BugLady

Books, LLC

Not sure which is my favorite because I love them all! Years ago during a butterfly survey at Honey Island Swamp, I cast my eyes on *Monarda punctata* for the first time and instantly fell in love with its beauty. Last year, Ken Bosso and Charles Allen each gave me some plants from their gardens. They are fantastic "Passalong Plants" (as author Felder Rushing would say). It's amazing how large they grew. I was delighted watching four different species of bees collecting nectar, including a new one to me, the Two-spotted Longhorn Bee. This helps prove the theory of "Plant it and they will come!" All three mountain mints will draw a wide variety of pollinators. Observing the activity of bees, wasps and butterflies on the buffet stand of *Pycnanthemum muticum* at Charles Allen's Allen Acres Bed & Breakfast is always exciting and enjoyable. When planting the Clustered Mountain mint in my office garden and before I could even spread the dirt over the roots, I was surprised by a hungry Horace Duskywing butterfly

Attention, Pollinators! Dinner is served!

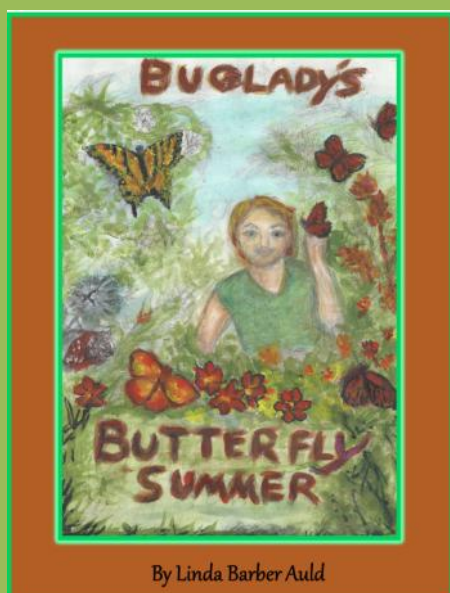
Nine fantastic native plants with nine gardeners' favorite picks *cont.*

that swooped down and landed on a blossom about a foot from my eyes! The best place to see the Slender Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*) in action is in the Gloster Arboretum's wildflower patches. The American Painted Lady, Common Buckeye and an array of skipper butterflies can be found enjoying the nectar banquet. The beautiful flowers of Whiteleaf Mountain Mint (*Pycnanthemum albescens*) also serve up an excellent enticement. My Phlox obsession was spawned by my good friend, Diane

Lafferty. As soon as I discovered this scrumptious plant, I became obsessed with planting it all over my garden. That's why they call me "Phloxy Lady". Every time I walk up my front steps, I can smell its delicious fragrance. From my bedroom window I see hummingbirds and butterflies taking turns fueling up on the blossoms. In Springtime stands of Woodland Phlox can transform a landscape into a fairyland of Nature's beauty. Then, *Robert Poore* Phlox begins showing its pink splash in the garden followed later by the

two-toned pink *John Fanick* which can provide a long bloom season through the end of October! Each year these plants will grow bigger and more beautiful. Remember Doug Tallamy's words, "Native insects recognize native plants as *"real food"*. Pollinators need our help all year long and adding any of these will assist in enhancing your botanical invitation for Nature's pollinators to accept. *Geaux Grow Natives!*

Learn more about raising butterflies and gardening to attract them!



Available @ www.nolabuglady.com

Check out our website and Facebook pages

2021 Field Trips

April 10th - PJF Farm & Lodge, Evangeline Parish

CENLA, led by Brian Early

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EAF823A1FAC61-pjfarm>

April 17th - Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve

SELA, led by Jeff Agnew

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EAF823A1FAC61-abita>

May 1st - Acadiana Park Nature Station - North Property

CENLA, led by Margaret Vinsent

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EAF823A1FAC61-acadiana>

May 14-16, Allen Acres Annual BBBB (bogs bird, butterflies, baygalls and more b's.)

For more information, contact Dr. Charles Allen or Susan Allen 337-328-2252 email native@camtel.net. You are invited to stay in the B and B (www.allenacresbandb.com) at a special \$80 rate per night.

Friday, May 14, 2021: 2 pm: Allen Acres Tour and possibly checkup of green fringed orchid. 6 pm-till: Potluck Supper and Power Point Presentations. Net-working, etc. Allen Acres (For directions, see below). We also will count fireflies and go sheeting (mothing), spider eyes, and maybe hear owls, chuck will's widows and ?

Saturday, May 15, 2021: 9 am: "Forest Service Traditional BBBBB" Tours of Bogs and Baygalls: Meet at Allen Acres (See below) and we will caravan to the sites. Tours will include pitcher plant bogs, upland areas, and other ecosystems. Orchids, pitcher plants, and other interesting plants should be seen. Several differ-

2021 Field Trips cont.

ent kinds of birds including the red cockaded woodpecker, butterflies, and other animals might be encountered. Bring your own snacks, water, or other beverages. The bogs are wet so dress accordingly. ,12-130 pm Lunch Break , **130 PM “Afternoon Field Trip”** Allen Acres hike and mushroom (bolete) survey including the Ouiska Chitto Creek area. David Lewis has agreed to lead the mushroom survey, **6:00 pm till: Potluck Supper** Power-Point Presentations, net-working, etc. We also will count fireflies and go sheeting (mothing), spider eyes, and maybe hear owls, chuck will’s widows and ?

Sunday May 16, 2021: 9 am: **“Sunday Morning Field Trip”** Depending on group’s interests etc. Begin from Allen Acres (see below) * During the weekend, we will continue our bioblitz by adding any new species to the cumulative Allen Acres list.

May 22nd - Wallace Lake Biological Station

NWLA/DeSoto Parish, led by Chris Doffitt

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4EAF823A1FAC61-wallace>

LNPS NOTICES

1. WEBMASTER — The LNPS webmaster position remains vacant. If you would like to volunteer for this position or know someone who is willing to help out, please contact LNPS by email lnpsinbox@gmail.com. LNPS has contracted to redesign the lnps web-site.

Correction to Greenbriar graphic in December 2020 Newsletter

Several people have inquired as to who designed and wrote the Greenbriar graphic in the December 2020 newsletter. The author, or maybe I should say artist, is Jody Shugart. Jody is an experienced native plant gardener and expert birder living on the Northshore of Lake Pontchartrain. He has birded and explored native plants across the state of Louisiana. I regret that we did not give credit to Jody when the article was published. Hopefully, this makes up for the error.

Annual LNPS Dues

Circle one: Individual, \$10. Student/Senior, \$5. Family, \$15. Organization, \$25. Sustaining, \$50. Corporate, \$100.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE _____

Checks payable to LNPS.

Mail to: Jackie Duncan, Treasurer

114 Harpers Ferry Road

Boyce, LA 71409

Or, memberships and donations may be paid online at:
www.lnps.org

