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WINTER 1993

NEWSLETTER

volume 11, number 4

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# A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT, BILL FONTENOT

Here's hoping all of you will reserve Saturday, January 29, 1994 to attend our annual LNPS Winter Meeting on the LSU-Alexandria campus. Since the first winter meeting was held in 1984, this gathering has gradually grown into quite an affair. I'm sure that many of you, like myself, had your first official contact with the LNPS at the winter meeting. This meeting is always held on the last Saturday in January, and always on the LSU-Alexandria campus. Because it is centrally located, held during a quiet time of the year, and usually features better-than-average programs, the winter meeting attracts the largest number of LNPS members (and prospective members!) of any of our society's activities. I trust that the 1994, the tenth anniversary edition of the winter meeting, will be no different.

This year's program speakers are very much in demand throughout Texas, Louisiana, and the entire South. First is Sally and Andy Wasowski, Dallas-based authors of Native Texas Plants, Requiem for a Lawnmower, and a soon-to-be-released work on native plant gardening in the southeastern United States. Since first meeting them several years ago, I have come to know Sally as the brains of the operation. Basically, Andy's the equipment mule, and reserves most of his comments for obnoxious waiters, hecklers, and the like. I've seen them do several different programs and speaking engagements, and have always been very impressed with their knowledge, humor, and "down-home" delivery. As of this writing, the official title of their presentation has not been determined, but I'll bet that it will center around replacing your tired, sterile lawn with tons of native alternatives.

Our second speaker is Nancy Newfield, professional bird guide, author, past-president of the Louisiana Ornithological Society, and above all, our region's top authority on hummingbirds and hummingbird gardening. From a purely ornithological standpoint, this Metairie-based birder has made downright historic contributions toward a better understanding of Louisiana bird life. Most intriguing of these is her 20-year hummingbird banding project, which has drastically altered our traditional appreciation of the status and habits of several west coast and Mexican hummingbird species that find their way into Louisiana each winter.

Though her official presentation topic for our meeting will center around gardening techniques for attracting hummingbirds, I'm certain that she will also fill us in on the latest findings from her banding project.

As always, books by our speakers and members, and native plants from local growers will be offered for sale during the course of the meeting. Feel free



to bring any natives that you might be propagating for trade, sale, or giveaway. Attendees either bring their own lunch, or dine in local Alexandria or LeCompte restaurants. The meeting doors open at 8:00 AM; programs begin at 9:00 AM. Members are encouraged to attend the business meeting which follows lunch. The business meeting usually adjourns at 3:00 PM. For all you newcomers, the LSU-Alexandria campus is located on US 167/71, about 4 miles south of Alexandria, and 4 miles north of LeCompte. Once you get on campus, just follow the "native plant" signs to the Nursing Auditorium. And by all means, bring your friends!

Best Holiday Wishes to All,

Bill Fontenot

#### DUES REMINDER

Don't forget that membership dues for 1993 were due by the first of the year, January 1, 1993! Members who did not paid their dues by April 1, 1993 were dropped from the roster. Please send your dues to the address below. If you know someone who is interested in joining (or rejoining) the LNPS, give them the following address. Make checks payable to the LNPS:

LNPS  
Rt. 1, Box 195  
Saline, Louisiana 71070

The dues schedule is as follows: Student=\$5.00, Senior Citizen=\$5.00, Individual=\$10.00, Family=\$15.00, Organization=\$25.00, Sustaining=\$50.00, Corporate=\$100.00.

#### DEADLINES FOR NEXT 4 NEWSLETTERS:

Don't forget! In an effort to better coordinate the distribution of information concerning field trips as well as other dated information the newsletter uses the following deadline policy. Any information received after the deadline will be included in the next newsletter. Deadlines for the next four newsletters are as follows:

Spring Newsletter:	March 1, 1994
Summer Newsletter:	June 1, 1994
Fall Newsletter:	September 1, 1994
Winter Newsletter:	December 1, 1994

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KALORAMA: THE WILLIAM B. REILY NATURE PRESERVE  
by Beth Erwin

The house and grounds collectively known as Kalorama, near the town of Collinston in Morehouse Parish in Northeastern Louisiana have played an integral part in the history of the area. It has been cherished by all of its owners, who each, at one time or the other has been prominent in the state and parish. In the late 1920s, Mr. and Mrs. William B. Reily bought the property and built a summer home there, and named it Kalorama, meaning "beautiful view". It has been recently purchased by the Reily Foundation of New Orleans.

Kalorama is located on what is known locally by the humble name of Red Hill. The hill is actually the first of several sharp ridges that rise abruptly from the rich delta cropland on the western side of the Mississippi. The ridges are characterized by steep ravines with a broad mix of soil types and plant species. Kalorama in particular contains a highly diverse mixture of plant and animal life. There are upland pines and hardwoods, pawpaw stands, and abundant herbaceous plant species native to mesic-type hardwood stands.

The Reily Foundation has purchased Kalorama to be developed into a nature preserve to be used as an educational tool for habitat study, conservation, and preservation in Northeast Louisiana. Plant habitats represented at Kalorama will be preserved and enhanced. Emphasis will also focus on attracting and perpetuating bird-life, especially song birds. Considerable effort will be made to educate children and young people in this area. Plans include nature day camps and working with the local school systems to reach children and expose them to the natural world. Area universities are cooperating with technical advice and will be able to use Kalorama for teaching and study. These efforts will be directed by a full time qualified curator, and overseen by a board of directors consisting of members from all parts of the local and regional community and interested professionals in the area.

REPORT ON THE 1993 EASTERN NATIVE PLANT ALLIANCE MEETING  
by John Mayronne

Constructive actions all LNPS members can take were urged by the ENPA organization. Among them are: make your views part of the public comment to lawmakers, Your actions affect pending legislation, such as the bills now before Congress to reauthorize the Endangered Species Act and amend the Federal Noxious Weed Act. Call or write today.

The National Biological Survey Act passed the House in October and now goes to the Senate ( Washington Post , 10/27/93). The bill, HR 1845, would establish an office in the Interior Department to study, monitor, and catalogue U.S. plants and animals, consolidating the research of eight bureaus. The House amended it to require written consent from landowners for survey officials to enter their property, but it rejected as non-germane a "takings" amendment sponsored by Rep. Billy Tauzin that would have required federal compensation to owners of property that lost more than 50 percent in value as a result of survey findings. (Rep. Tauzin is also the sponsor of a similar amendment to the Endangered Species Act).

The claim that "takings" impair private property rights is part of several efforts to undermine federal programs protecting the environment or worker health, among them the "wise use movement". Information on the "takings" issue and related constitutional and policy questions is available from these organizations: Endangered Species Coalition ("Property Rights and Endangered



Species Protection") and the National Audubon Society ("The National Biological Survey & the 'Taking' Issue" and "Property Rights and the Environment"), both at 666 Pennsylvania Avenue S.E., Washington, D.C., 20003; and the National Wildlife Federation ("The Truth about 'Takings'"), 1400 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036-2266.

Enforcement efforts against plant poaching are the subject of an article in the November/December Nature Conservancy magazine. Author William Stolzenburg traces the magnitude of "botanical banditry" for the horticultural and pharmaceutical trades, and even in the name of botany. To illustrate enforcement problems he describes efforts to stop the poaching of Venus flytraps in North Carolina, at the Nature Conservancy's Green Swamp preserve and the state's Holly Shelter gamelands. It's a lucrative business, and in the view of one wildlife officer the problem is getting worse. But the grip of poaching may be loosened, Stolzenburg adds, as propagation of carnivorous plants and other species gains ground.

Faith Campbell reported on amendments to the Federal Noxious Weed Act supported by the Weed Science Society, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Natural Areas Association. Their joint position also suggests actions weed scientists might take at the local level. The ENPA agreed to concentrate on putting together information we can all use, with the longer-term goal of developing a position paper and status report for use with a variety of audiences, and lists of target species tailored to specific audiences. Anyone with information related to this issue should write to: John Mayronne, 320 North Theard Street, Covington, La. 70433-2836.

In a discussion of issues surrounding the commercial collection of plant materials from the wild, Faith Campbell reviewed interactions between ENPA and the Federal Trade Commission concerning proposed changes in definitions of such terms as "nursery grown" and "nursery propagated". She reported the current status of efforts to get the wording changed. In essence, the FTC has told her that the staff is reviewing information and will make a recommendation to the Commission, and that she will be informed of the Commission's decision after it is made.

Other issues that emerged included concerns about proper labelling of plant materials by nurseries, certification of local sources of materials used in restoration work, the ethics of plant rescues and of sustained-yield harvesting, the need to get nurseries to be sensitive about invasive exotics in the trade, and issues surrounding trade in rare, threatened and endangered plants.

Other ways of interacting with the nursery industry were discussed. They included attending trade shows, annual meetings, and short courses; getting to know leaders in associations; getting acquainted with extension service personnel; and getting ideas to state experiment station personnel.

#### HR 1330

(Editor's note: the following was sent to John Mayronne by a concerned LNPS member. John states "If anyone is not aware of this legislation they should be, for several of our state legislators have been negatively involved with this legislation. Contact your legislators now and voice your opposition.")

The environmental rapists are hard at work, this time, attempting to enlist the power of our federal government to back them. One of our representatives, Jimmy Hayes, has introduced a bill into the house which purports to be a "comprehensive wetlands conservation" act. This thinly veiled hoax would, in fact, do away with any wetlands conservation at all. If it becomes law, the bill will dismantle the protections of the EPA and the



Clean Water Act's section 404. It will divide all wetlands into three arbitrary groups, according to their value. Those in the lowest group will be drained and disposed of in any way without approval. Those in the middle group can be disposed of by a simple permit and those in the highest group will require a payment to the owners, EQUIVALENT TO WHAT THE PROPERTY WOULD BE WORTH IF DRAINED AND READY FOR DEVELOPMENT, in order to be saved. Bear in mind that this artificial classification will be dynamic, such that after all the lower group wetlands are lost, those remaining will be revamped into three groups until, eventually, there will not be a bloody thing left to worry about protecting.

Additionally, this proposed legislation would eviscerate the little enforcement or protection which might remain and would also limit the amount of high value wetlands within a parish. HR 1330 is an environmental nightmare designed to afford very short term profits to developers, loggers and the oil industry, with no regard for the future. Please write to your senators, congressmen and friends, urging that they make a noise on the hill, demanding that our precious wetlands, only a small portion of that found 100 years ago, be saved from the ravages of the pump and the bulldozer.

The following was submitted by our President, Bill Fontenot:

Wasowski, Sally with Andy Wasowski. 1992. Requiem for a Lawnmower: and Other Essays on Easy Gardening with Native Plants. Taylor Publishing Company, Dallas. 181pp.

Looking back into American gardening history, it is truly difficult to believe that the concept of designing naturalized landscapes using predominately native plant species never really caught on until recently. While Gertrude Jekyll popularized naturalized landscaping styles in England back around the turn of the century, Americans never really bought into her philosophy, opting instead to further develop the more formal brand of design which featured rather narrow, symmetrical beds and huge expanses of closely clipped lawns. Given the almost boundless inspiration of the literally thousands of precious natural habitats which surround our American towns and cities, it is indeed ironic that we have postponed nature's call for simple, self-perpetuating garden designs for so long.

But all the while, a "native plant movement" has been incubating in our country, instigated first by a handful of amateur gardener/naturalists, and eventually supported by a small but determined group of botanists, horticulturists, and landscapers. Astonishingly, it wasn't until the 1970's when the movement finally won a (albeit small) place in the heart of the gardening industry. At about this time, gardeners/writers Sally and Andy Wasowski "converted" to this movement, and by 1988 produced a fine regional treatise entitled Native Texas Plants.

Recently, their second work, Requiem for a Lawnmower has been released. To be sure, Requiem for a Lawnmower is no ordinary gardening book, but rather a compendium of thought on native plants and native gardening. In fact, the book is arranged into a series of extremely readable essays, all written in the Wasowski's trademark conversational style. But one of the first things that readers will note about this collection is that each piece is chock full of juicy tips and keen observations which go a long way toward increasing the long-term success rate of gardeners endeavoring to naturalize their landscapes.

The installments (forty-one in all) are organized under seven



thought-provoking sections: Going Back to Basics, Zeroing in on Your Own Backyard, Putting it All Together, A Native for Every Niche, Observations, Creating Habitats, and Where Do We Go from Here? Coursing throughout each installment are the Wasowski's down-home, common sense, and sometimes brutally honest perceptions. Some will make you laugh, like Sally's candid admission of her affliction with the dreaded "black thumb" disease in her installment on "easy plants": "...The way I see it, if a plant can survive in spite of my care, anyone can grow it successfully." And, "...If Mexican hat doesn't work for you - well, I understand they're doing wonderful things these days with plastic." Some may cry out: "How can I break this to you gently? If you're an average American homeowner, your present landscape is undoubtedly an ecological disaster." And some will make you solemnly nod your head in agreement, such as the one dealing with the "typical suburban yard": "You know the kind - the one with perfect lawn unmarred by weed or leaf, the rigid fringe of hedge that never peeps above a window sill, the scentless, overbred flowers lined up in neat rows, and the tree pruned to within an inch of its life."

After ten years of pursuing the "new" art of native gardening, I can write without hesitation that I have picked up at least one important gardening tip or observation in almost every installment. Just as Caroline Dormon's Natives Preferred celebrated the beginnings of the native plant movement in 1965, Sally and Andy Wasowski's Requiem for a Lawnmower is no less that a watershed work which has signalled the movement's coming of age.

If you're still unsure as to whether Requiem for a Lawnmower is your kind of book, I'll leave you with one final quote: "So we dug up the last of the lawn, set our lawnmower on the curb (it was gone within the hour), and put in a lovely woodland garden. We selected extra large limestone flagstones and laid a gently winding path from the street up to the coutryard steps, and another for the postman. The paths now wind through a profusion of turk's cap, inland sea oats, zexmenia, spiderwort, ruellia, and other woodland flowers, all held together with a basic groundcover of horseherb...we sit in it, we eat in it, the cats play in it, and passing joggers compliment us on it. And we can't help but feel a little smug as we watch our neighbors out mowing their lawns." Can you say "Amen"? If you can, but the book!

#### THE WILD LOUISIANA STAMP PROGRAM by Julia Larke

In 1992, Act 193 of the Louisiana State Legislature authorized the Wild Louisiana Stamp Program to generate revenues to support the functions of the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program and nongame programs within the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. As of July 1, 1993, a Wild Louisiana Stamp is required of anyone ages 16 to 59 using Department administered lands who is not in possession of a hunting or fishing license. Department administered lands include wildlife management areas such as Sicily Island Hills and Tunica Hills, and wildlife refuges such as the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge and Game Preserve.

Each year the Wild Louisiana stamp is to depict a representative Louisiana nongame species or habitat. This includes plants as well as animals and habitat. The 1993-1994 stamp, the first design of the program, is a Louisiana Black Bear in a bottomland hardwood forest. The stamp cost is \$5.50, the same as a duck stamp, and it may be purchased at local sporting goods stores, from your parish sheriff's office, or from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Even if you have a hunting or fishing license you can purchase the stamp as a contribution to the Natural Heritage Program and nongame programs



in the state. If you have any questions, please call the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (Phone 504-765-2821).

#### FLORIDA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWS

The Florida Native Plant Society will hold a Spring Conference April 29, 30, and May 1, 1994 at Cocoa Beach Holiday Inn Resort (Phone 1-800-226-6587). The FNPS conference will focus on "Integrating People with the Natural Landscape". This event will be a fun filled and educational three days for homeowners and professionals. There will be seminars, guest speakers, landscape awards, book and plant sales, a plant raffle and field trips, including canoeing. For more information, contact William and Carolyn Alvord, 1355 Bishop Road, Merritt Island, Florida 32953 (Phone 1-407-459-2132).

#### A REQUEST FROM THE EDITOR

Your editor has been trying to obtain a plant of a yellow-flowering native Louisiana Trillium. If anyone has one that was collected in Louisiana and that they can spare, please write me at my address (appears on page 2 of this newsletter).