

# LNPS NEWS

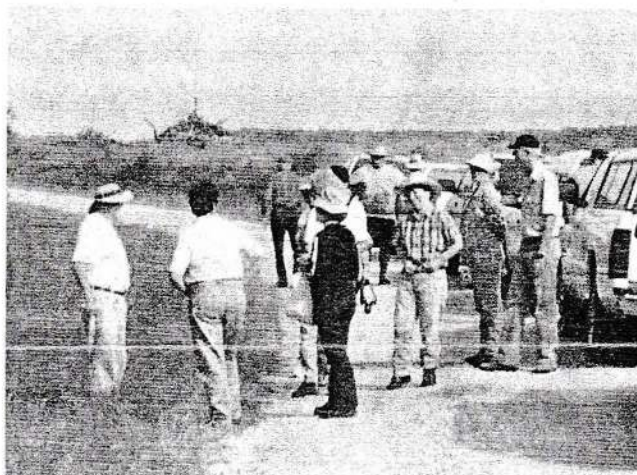
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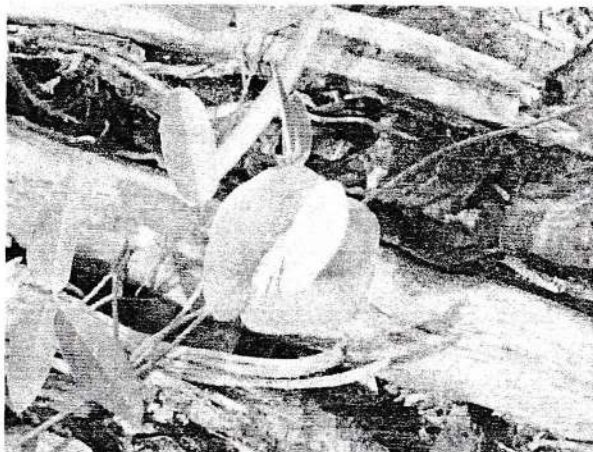
## LNPS FALL FIELD TRIP

### Sabine Wildlife Management Area and Allen Acres in Vernon Parish

The LNPS Fall Field Trip, September 19-21, 2003, enticed 26, plus or minus, native plant enthusiasts to visit the Sabine WMA, Allen Acres, Vernon Bogs, and Birds Creek. I say plus or minus because participants in the group came and went at will.



Saturday morning the sun was shining and the temperature was cool, but warmed to almost hot as the day progressed. The first stop was a clearcut that was choked full of wildflowers. I must say the best stop of the day for wildflowers. You couldn't see them until you got out and looked, then they were everywhere. There were butterfly weed, two butterfly peas – centrosema and clitoria (see picture below), lobelia, blue sage in abundance, a sea of purple desmodium, pluchea, goldenrod, liatris, etc. After meandering the clearcut, we moved on to a creekwalk to see large beech and magnolia (a good place for the mushroom pickers). Lunch was calling by then and we regrouped at Dairy Queen or other eating establishment of choice in Zwolle. After lunch, a short stop was made to an old mission cemetery – the oldest grave found was somewhere around 1869.



*Centrosema virginianum*

After a roadside stop and finding a bevy of crane-fly orchids and Carolina holly at another creek in the WMA, we called it a day around 4 p.m. The roads were a bit of a challenge to follow the map and also not to fall into a rut, but we made it safe and sound with only one wrong turn.

Some went home, some went other places, and some went to Allen Acres, Vernon Parish.

The Allen's hospitality is above and beyond. The food was scrumptious – thanks to Susan and to everyone else that brought a dish. Sleep under the stars, in the house, in your RV, or at a motel – the choice was yours. The rain began early Sunday morning, but the mist was light and did not run us off. We stopped at a bog where possumhaw viburnum, poison sumac, coreopsis, barbara's button, baygall waxmyrtle, and cyrilla among others were found. Then we moved on to Birds Creek. Who would have guessed that there are big boulders and rock cliff faces in Vernon Parish – but there are right along Birds Creek. We even skipped rocks.

The weekend was a very nice short vacation. Thanks to all the participants for making it so.

*Report & Photos by Jackie Duncan*

How the Louisiana Native Plant Society was Formed

Recollections by Richard Johnson

Spring, 1982

Karlene DeFatta of Keithville, La. had long talked with friends about having a native plant group in Louisiana to share information and increase awareness of our unique state flora. A message from Karlene posted in "The Shreveport Times" and telephone calls from her called us together at the Barnwell Center, Shreveport, La. About two dozen people showed up for this first meeting. This group would later become the Northwest Chapter of the Louisiana Native Plant Society. A call went out to other states wildflower groups for information on their societies and their by-laws. We wanted to avoid as many pitfalls as possible--most of us were more interested in plants and could care less about rules!

Summer, 1982

A committee was selected to work on our by-laws with the expectation of being chartered as soon as possible. Officers chosen were Richard Johnson, president; Elinor Herd, treasurer. Teresa Thrash volunteered to be editor for the group.

Fall, 1982

We met to discuss bylaws and apply for a state charter as the Louisiana Native Plant Society. Karlene DeFatta was in contact with David Heikamp, president of the newly formed Greater New Orleans Native Plant Society. This group wanted to co-join the two groups under one charter for a truly state wide organization.

Winter, 1982-83

The Louisiana Native Plant Society Charter was granted on February 25, 1983 and filed and recorded in the office of Secretary of State on March 3, 1983. A list was assembled of potential members to contact. The decision was made to have at least one meeting a year centrally located so that the business of the group could be taken care of at that meeting. A meeting was scheduled for April 16, 1983 at Briarwood the Caroline Dormon Nature Preserve to bring together all interested native plant people throughout the state.

Spring, 1983

A group of about thirty people met April 16, 1983 at the Nature Preserve to discuss mutual interest in a statewide organization. Everyone was very enthusiastic and glad to know that they were not the only voice touting native plants. A convention was scheduled for August in Alexandria. Richard Johnson was asked to handle the details and got in touch with Sara Simmons, Alexandria, La. a long time friend to ask who to contact and she recommended Robert Turley, who was at that time parish agent in the Alexandria area and Dr. Ben Martin with Louisiana State University-Alexandria. Both are great plantsmen and were very enthusiastic about helping get the Louisiana Native Plant Society off to a good start. They were in charge of planning the August meeting and field trip.

Summer, 1983

On August 20, 1983 the first statewide Louisiana Native Plant Society convention was held at the Extension Service Building, 708 Washington St., Alexandria, Louisiana. The day began at 8:00 A.M. with a field trip to the Wild Azalea Trail at Kincaid Lake and was led by Dr. Ben Martin (LSU-A) and Dr. Charles Allen (LSU-E). Later at the business meeting the group voted to accept the bylaws of the Northwest Chapter with a few minor changes. Officers elected were Richard Johnson, president, Dr. Ben Martin, vice-president, Elinor Herd, treasurer, Neil Bertinot, secretary, and David Heikamp, editor.

The group decided to have the winter meeting in the center of the state and to have it on the last Saturday in January each year. Dr. Martin arranged for us to use the LSU-A facilities. The summer-fall field trips would be at the discretion of the sitting president.

The Louisiana Native Plant Society has been a wonderful learning experience about our native flora and the habitats that they require to survive. It has made us more aware of the plant community as a whole. Through the years we have managed to have field trips to nearly every part of Louisiana. An added benefit has been the chance to meet the most wonderful people in the world!

## President's Comments: "Take The Plunge....The Native plant Way"

By Jimmy Culpepper

*Most of the major points of this text were taken from the book, Native Plant Gardening in the South, by Bill Fontenot*

**Native plants** are those species that naturally belong to a particular region. These species occur within a given area as a result of many years of continuous interaction with changing climate and geology.

The benefits of native plants are the following:

- 1) they represent a long-term investment that increases in value,
- 2) natives are hardier and more disease resistant due to centuries of local adaptation and natural selection,
- 3) native plants require less maintenance in order for them to thrive and
- 4) wildlife are more naturally attracted to the food and shelter sources provided by native plants.

The ecosystems of the Gulf and southern Atlantic Coastal Plains contain over 70 natural habitats and support several thousand species of native and naturalized plants. Surprisingly, less than 10% of this rich diversity of plant material is currently used in cultivated situations.

Think about your yard as it exists today. How much long-term time and money are you investing in it in order to maintain it as it is? The process of transforming your property into a more ecological correct habitat involves producing favorable microclimates; more shady places, offering more protection from over-exposure to the elements, offering more water sources, more food, less lawn, less chemicals etc. Remember, landscapes are actually habitats and habitats supply living things with food, water, air, and shelter.

**The Basics** - Habitat is any place where food, water, and shelter for living things may be found on a continual or self-perpetuating basis.

**Diversity of Habitats = Diversity of Life** - The greater the variation in habitats, the greater the variation in living things that occupy them. This principle holds true even in the smallest yards. The most ecologically sound approach to backyard wildlife attraction involves separating your property into distinct rooms or sections providing a particular type of habitat for each.

**The Design Scheme** - Within the concept of a typical urban rectangular lot, the concept of a naturalized landscape design revolves around two basic elements:

- 1) The planting of a wide (4-20 feet, depending on lot size) of shrubs, large and small trees and perennials encircling the perimeter of the lot.
- 2) A wide planting band of smaller trees, shrubs and perennials should encircle the home. With these two elements in place, the lawn size is immediately reduced by 30-60% depending on the width of the beds.

Depending on the size of the property, you may want to complete the project in stages. The idea is to have a plan in place you can follow as time and money allow.

Depending on the size, elevation, soil type etc., of your lot, you may opt for building raised beds (4 inches of topsoil, ground pine bark mulch, sand and sphagnum peat moss or combinations thereof) for your plantings.

**The Importance of Water** - Dependable sources of clean water is as important as food sources. Birdbaths are good, but should be supplemented with a small pool or an inverted jar-type poultry watering devices.

**The Importance of Cover** - Large swaths of thickly planted shrubs and small trees and homemade brush piles are "musts" for attracting wildlife. Evergreen species provide a combination of food and cover during winter months.

**Species and Site Selection** - Plants have definite ideas on where they like to live. Many native plants have a surprisingly large percentage of species that exhibit high degrees of adaptability with respect to soil types, moisture levels, and sun exposure. Moisture loving species (iris, Virginia willow, buttonbush and baldcypress) do quite well in many drier locations. Many species like red maple, sweetbay magnolia, redbud, mayhaw, and Indian pink will grow just about anywhere.

**Soils** - The four general soil categories and that come into play in selecting cultivated sites are soils that run from the following:

- 1) dry and sandy,
- 2) to well-drained but rich sandy loam,
- 3) to moist, rich alluvial loams,
- 4) to wetter tighter, high clay to high sand.

As a rule, plant inhabitants from the latter two categories demonstrate the highest degree of site adaptability. Plants on drier sites do not adapt well to wetter sites.

**Exposure** - The four exposure categories can range from the following:

- 1) harsh full sun (normally western, southern and southwestern sectors of the yard),
- 2) to softer morning sun (east and northeast spots),
- 3) to dappled shade or filtered light,
- 4) to deep shade.

In general plants from shadier locations adapt to sunnier locations. Most sun-loving species, however, do not adapt as well to shadier sites.

**Mulching** - Organic mulching is one of the most important aspects in maintaining healthy plants. Mulching conserves and regulates moisture levels around root zones, protects root zones from extremes in heat and cold and serves to condition the soil by contributing nutrients and humic acid. A good mulch consists of a layer of hardwood leaves overlain with pine needles. Mulching usually breaks down into humus in about six months, at which time additional leaves may be added.

Educating yourself about native plant species is a must. One way is attending garden tours that highlight native plants. Another way is using resource materials on native plants. Three of my favorites books on native plants are *Native Gardening in the South* by Bill Fontenot (best self-help publication on natives in the landscape), to order, send \$20 to Bill Fontenot, 217 St. Fidelis St. Carencro, LA. 70520-6019.

The other two resource books are *Southern Plants for Landscape Design* by Neil Odenwald and Jim Turner and *Gardening with Native Plants of the South* by Sally and Andy Wasowski.

So, take your time, go slow, don't be afraid to make a mistake and enjoy the transformation of your yard and garden.

The Louisiana Native Plant Society was founded in 1983 as a state-wide, non-profit organization.

Its purposes are:

- 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.

**Membership form:**

**Checks payable to LNPS.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Annual dues: Student/Senior \$5 \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$15 \_\_\_\_\_  
                   Organization \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to : Jackie Duncan, LNPS treasurer, 114 Harpers Ferry Road, Boyce, LA 71409**

### Annual Meeting

Plans are moving along for the Annual Meeting to be held February 6 - 7, 2004 at Camp Grant walker in Pollock, La. Hallie Dozier, of the LSU Agriculture Center and Latimore Smith, Nature Conservancy of Louisiana will be the featured speakers. Friday evening is mainly socializing, with the programs and business meeting on Saturday. This year's field trip on Sunday will be to the Southern Forest Heritage Museum, Long Leaf, in southwest Rapides Parish.



*Clitoria mariana*

photo by Jackie Duncan

#### Upcoming Events of Interest to LNPS members:

**October 9-11: BIG THICKET SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE;** Beaumont, TX. Contact Cathy Guivas, (409) 839-2689 ext. 223, or [cathy\\_quivas@nps.gov](mailto:cathy_quivas@nps.gov).

**October 16-19: TEXAS NATIVE PLANT SYMPOSIUM;** A chance to tour the Edward Plateau as the meeting is in Fredericksburg, TX. Contact Peter Loos or [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org).

**November 19-22: SER (Society for Ecological Restoration) International 2003 Conference:** Austin, TX. *Assembling the Pieces: Restoration, Design, & Landscape Ecology.* [info@ser.org](mailto:info@ser.org)

**November 1: Emory Smith Day, Fall Edition:** Hilltop Arboretum, 11855 Highland Road, Baton Rouge, LA. (225) 767-6916.

**November 5-8: American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta, Southeast Regional Conference** hosted by Hill top Arboretum. See above listing.

**February 6-7, 2004: LNPS MEETING;** Camp Grant Walker, Pollock, LA.

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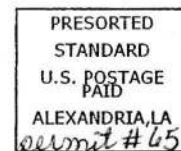
## Latimore Smith, One of the 2004 Annual Meeting Speakers

Latimore Smith was born and raised in Louisiana, where he continues to reside in Tangipahoa Parish with his wife, Nelwyn McInnis. He has been an avid student of Louisiana's native flora and natural habitats for more than 25 years. In 1983, he received an M.S. in Wildlife Biology from LSU, and since 1986 has been the plant community ecologist for the Louisiana Natural Heritage Program of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. As ecologist with the Heritage Program, he has studied the floristic composition, functional dynamics and physiographic variation of Louisiana's native plant communities. He has worked with industry, state and federal agencies, academia and numerous private organizations and landowners across Louisiana in the conservation of Louisiana's natural heritage. His principal area of study and conservation work has been with Louisiana's longleaf pine forests, savannahs and associated plant communities. See page 5 for more information about the annual meeting.

**Christmas Gift Idea.** A great way to remember a fellow plant enthusiast during the holiday is with a gift membership to the Louisiana Native Plant Society. Use membership form on page 4.

**Welcome to New Members:** Jim and Shelia Russell, Mandeville, LA; Rachal Emrick, Lufkin, TX; Hurst Samson, New Roads, LA; Jesse Slocum, Holden, LA; Ruth Griffin, Minden, LA; Paul Fontenot, Lafayette, LA; and George O. Broussard, Lafayette, LA.

LOUISIANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY  
2906 HWY 457  
ALEXANDRIA, LA. 71302



IF NUMBER ABOVE YOUR  
NAME IS HIGHLIGHTED, IT  
IS TIME TO PAY DUES. USE  
FORM INSIDE.

\*03  
Larry Raymond  
6675 N Park Cir  
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