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NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1991

volume 9, number 2

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

These past few months have been busy ones for your LNPS officers. Pushing for legislative committee approval of the proposed Threatened and Endangered Plant Act has turned into a crash course in civics, and less pleasantly, the ins and outs of our state government. At the time of this writing, the bill is tabled, and we are urging other groups to support us.

Underneath all of this, preparations are moving swiftly along for the Tulane conference - Conservation and the Use of Native Plants in the Gulf Coastal Plain - scheduled for June 13th through June 15th. I hope all of you have your registrations in. It will be a great opportunity to meet other similarly interested individuals from other areas, exchange ideas, have a great time, and learn a lot.

Also please take time to fill out and mail in the enclosed postcard, we need your help!

SUMMER MEETING TO BE HELD OCTOBER 12, 1991

The LNPS will hold its summer meeting on October 12, 1991 following a field trip in Winn Parish. The field trip, led by Nelwyn McInnis, will leave from Briarwood. According to Richard and Jesse Johnson of Briarwood, camping space will be available to those who need it.

Our Environmental Issues Committee will meet at this time also. Any issues of concern need to be mailed to our President, John Mayronne at:

John Mayronne
 320 North Theard Street
 Covington, Louisiana 70433

Please note all the circumstances and possible solutions to the issue you feel is important. The sooner these issues are received, the better they can be assimilated into our time table.

Look for more information on these scheduled events in our September newsletter.

DUES REMINDER

Do you know anyone who would like to join the LNPS? Tell them to send their dues (\$5) to our Treasurer:

Mary Moseley
122 Justin
Shreveport, Louisiana 71105

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:

Fall Newsletter:	September 1, 1991
Winter Newsletter:	December 1, 1991
Spring Newsletter:	March 1, 1992
Summer Newsletter:	June 1, 1992

CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!

by John Mayronne

The "Conservation and Use of Native Plants in the Gulf Coastal Plain" Conference was well received. Held June 12 through 15 at Tulane University in New Orleans, participants from eight states attended. For the first time organizations from several states worked together developing a program that addressed topics of regional interest.

Thursday's topics addressed conservation and land management issues, identifying specific plant communities as well as plants, programs and methods that can be utilized in an effort to work with development in these specific areas.

Environmental education programs opened Friday morning identifying the latest techniques in environmental teaching. Included within this group of lectures were sessions that discussed edible plants, plant identification, and requirements for specific plants. The active involvement of participants in these sessions was very effective and entertaining to all.

As the day progressed, we learned new ways of viewing, designing, and recording our garden within the landscape. The structure of a garden with specific plants, the changes that occur within it and the importance of our native flora in cleansing our resources (water, etc.) were all included within these sessions.

Saturday we began to wrap up our conference by touching on very important topics concerning everyone involved. Such topics included cultural practices and finding needed resources. Our final session was a very rewarding one which addressed the environment, us (individuals, teachers, organizations, etc.), where we are and where we are going. We all play a crucial role in our part of the world today. Get involved, it does make a difference. We need your help.

Our wide range of field trips was considered a plus by all and served the public by identifying our wonderful, diverse environmental heritage.

Our plant sale, offering over 50 different native plant varieties, and our exhibit area, helped generate capital to foster LNPS projects in the future.

Evaluation forms were very helpful, and overwhelmingly positive. Many called for more conferences of this type in the near future. LNPS hopes to stay in the forefront of educational efforts with projects such as this.

A special thanks to our speakers! Their knowledge and sincere dedication to educational forums of this nature help provide hope for the future. This can be a better place, we just all need to make an effort and get involved.

GROWING WILDFLOWERS

by Beth Erwin

One of the nicest things about speaking to groups about wildflowers is the people you go to know, the things they show you, and their eagerness to tell you about the things they see, all because they know you are interested.

One day last week I returned home to find a sprig of alligator weed stuck anonymously in the back door latch. A couple of quick calls to likely persons did not reveal the donor, and I forgot about it. This is not an uncommon experience at my house, as this area seems to be devoid of persons who are able to identify common wildflowers. The week before I had received a carefully pressed and preserved specimen that I think might be star jasmine (not a native) from my sister in Shreveport. That was not a first either. The trouble with things from my sister is that they are never easy to identify. She has the advantage of the same mother as I, plus she went along on at least two taxonomy field trips when I was in college. I generally have to pass anything she sends on to a higher authority for verification. She would never send me alligator weed, which brings me back to my original subject. A day or two later, the lady who left me the alligator grass finally caught me at home. She had spent the day digging wildflowers around the parish. My heart sank to my feet as she described each one, and I identified them over the phone. I have gently suggested, and occasionally implored, that she cease her digging. She blithely goes on, often begging me to come with her. My excuses sound worn, even to me. How do you feel when someone says something like, "I've tried to get that orange butterfly weed (or false indigo, or some other hard-to-transplant species) for years - I've dug it up so many times, but it just won't grow for me"? When I suggested buying one at the local nursery or growing it from seed, they give me a look that I cannot help but interpret as "that's not an option."

On a more pleasant note, a lady that walks in our neighborhood stopped by while I was sitting on the front porch to ask what that beautiful tree with the wonderful large leaves was. It was Magnolia macrophylla. She told me that she walked by my yard every day and enjoyed seeing the different things blooming. It was between times on that day, and nothing much was in flower. There had been hints that it looked weedy. I had removed all of the weeds, everything there just hadn't bloomed yet. She assured me it was NOT weedy, and she loved it just the way it was. Far be it from me to argue with such obvious wisdom and insight!

I've noticed an interesting thing this wet spring. On a recent field trip we found several species of fall asters in bloom, and today I found Eupatorium coelestinum (Blue Mist Flower) in bloom. When I harken back to last fall when my Iris fulva, cinnamon fern, and certain others bloomed, I wonder what's going on.

