
MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 1991

FROM THE EDITOR:

Fall is the time to appreciate vibrant yellows, purples, reds, and the subtle shades of brown. Cooler weather and shorter days bring with them the blossoming of fall flowers and the dominance of seedheads--especially of grasses. There is also the anticipation of renewal in the new year, along with catalogs, Christmas, and other holiday ventures. In my garden, rosettes of coreopsis and other perennial species are appearing. Native grasses and asters--both "weeds" and intentionally planted--are prominent, as are goldenrod, blue salvia, and Chrysopsis or goldaster.

Numerous prairie wildflower and grass species are best planted at this time. Just don't forget to mark where you put them! Choose exceptional seed stalks of the many grasses and summer-blooming flowering plants for dried arrangements.

For those arm-chair naturalists, be sure to catch Public TV's "Mississippi Outdoors." This is a great series that offers short, but very interesting highlights of Mississippi's vast natural heritage. Chris Wells, Will McDearmon, Eve Dingus, other MNPS members, and the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Staff have appeared from time-to-time to talk about native plants and habitats, natural areas, the Crosby Arboretum, wildlife refuges, and other projects.

Every other year MNPS renews itself with the election of officers. An extensive recruitment effort has yielded one nominee for each of the positions: President, Vice-president, Secretary-Treasurer, and Editor.

PLEASE VOTE by checking or writing in the candidate of your choice on the form provided. PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 1st. If there is a sufficient response to write-in candidates, we will hold a run-off election with the next newsletter. All nominees must be willing to serve for 2 years.

There is a wealth of talent in our membership that is--as yet--untapped. We would like your suggestions on how best to access your abilities or those of other members. A copy of

the by-laws listing organizational duties and responsibilities is available upon request.

This is my last issue as editor. I have enjoyed working with you the readers and writers and hope you accord the new editors the same regard that you have shown me. I have learned much about this process, but it is time to move on to other things. I shall continue to write for the newsletter, but pass on the creative-writing-and-editing-with-deadlines to someone else with more "free" time.

NATIVE GRASSES: PURPLETOP AND BLUESTEM
by Vic Rudis, Starkville

At our Sessums field trip, we learned about several native grasses, in addition to the many flowering plants that appeared October 5th. [Our apologies to those who got wet!]

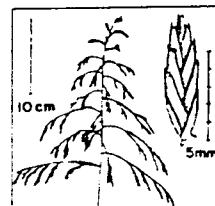
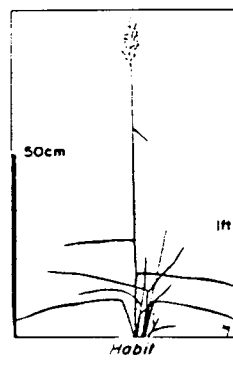
Tridens flavus, or purpletop, is a warm-season perennial bunch grass that reaches 4 to 6 feet. Growth starts in early spring and continues in July. At this time, individual bunches are 2 feet tall and 6 to 8 inches in diameter.

Seedheads are produced in August and September, with the seed unfurling and maturing in October. By clasping the seed stalk, one can experience the feeling of grease or wax; it has another common name--greasegrass.

I came across this plant in my yard by simply forgetting to weed a daylily patch. One cool August day, I got around to weeding and discovered that there were not ONE but SEVERAL grass species. To make the area more attractive, I weeded out the johnsongrass and saved only clumped areas of purpletop.

This fall, the purple-to-black cast of Tridens flavus seedheads move rhythmically and contrast beautifully with the lighter green leaf blades. I have a deep-seated interest with organisms that sway with the slightest breeze--movements that calm my spirit after a hard day dealing with unexpected demands that come my way.

Tridens ambiguus (Ell.) Schult.



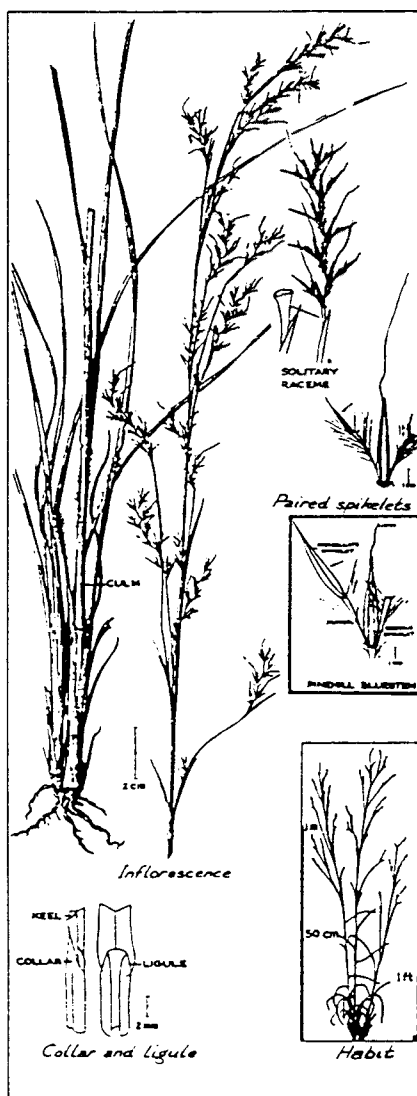
T. FLAVUS

Equally compelling are the bluestems: Andropogon scoparius or little bluestem (height 5 ft), and Andropogon virginicus or broomsedge (height 3 ft). Both of these species are prominently tawny or rust-colored at this time of year in the Southeast U.S.

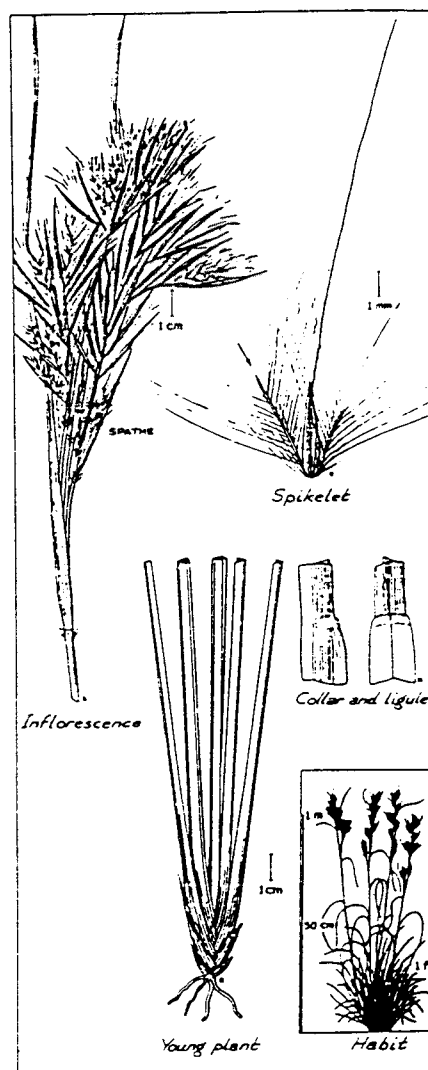
A. virginicus is the more common variety in abandoned fields. If picked before the seedhead expands fully, broomsedge makes a nice dried arrangement all by itself. A. scoparius is more common in cutover or open forested areas. Its height and form lends itself better to background material in dried arrangements and in meadow gardens.

[Illustrations are from: Grelen, Harold E.; Hughes, Ralph H. 1984. Common herbaceous plants of Southern forest range. Research Paper SO-210. New Orleans, LA: USDA Forest Service, Southern Forest Experiment Station. 147 p.]

(*Andropogon scoparius* Michx.)



(*Andropogon virginicus* var. *abbreviatus* (Hack.))



BUTTERFLIES OF MISSISSIPPI

Ever wonder what it takes to fertilize many of the State's native plants? I've been noticing lots of bumblebees and butterflies lately; they seem to outnumber honeybees during the coolest and hottest times of the day.

In Mississippi, there are at least 144 species of butterflies, mostly native, according to a 1989 pamphlet on Mississippi's common butterflies. The title "A guide to some of the common butterflies of Mississippi" is an 8-page pamphlet with scholarly references to work done in Mississippi. This supplement to standard butterfly guides is printed and available through the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science, 111 North Jefferson St., Jackson, MS 39202.

BOOKS OF INTEREST by Vic Rudis, Starkville

Peattie, D.C. 1991. A natural history of trees of eastern and central North America. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. 606 p. \$16.95.

This book, a rerelease of a 1950 guidebook, contains a wealth of tidbits for the amateur and professional naturalist. It contains a wealth of technical details, herbal folklore, and historical accounts dating back to Indian and Colonial periods for many species that occur frequently in the Southern U.S. What impressed me the most were historical uses. Most guidebooks provide a 1 or 2 line statement of uses, but Peattie's book devotes at least a 5-line paragraph, and often 1 or 2 pages for many species.

The text does suffer a bit from not having incorporated more recent scientific findings, nomenclature, and uses, as it was written over 40 years ago. Extensive coverage of Northeastern and North Central U.S. tree species also can be a distraction for Southerners who have never seen them. Despite these drawbacks, this book makes a fine supplement for the shelves of professional naturalists and a useful library reference to liven up tree identification in elementary and high school science classes.

Ocone, Lynn; Pranis, Eve. 1990. The National Gardening Association guide to kids' gardening: a complete guide for teachers, parents and youth leaders. New York: Wiley Science Editions, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 148 p. \$9.95 plus shipping. Available through the National Gardening Association, Youth Programs, 180 Flynn Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401. (802) 863-1308.

This excellent primer has lots of ideas for introducing kids to nature. The basics are covered, as well as the practical aspects of setting up a planting area for use by children. Included are tips on how to handle leadership, land, cooperative funding, vandalism, continuity in summer months, and motivation of children and community volunteers.

While many of the innovative examples focus on vegetable gardening, topics on recycling, journaling, seed production and growth, and fun learning activities have universal application. The principles of involving kids with nature--making it fun, rewarding, and doing it on a shoestring budget--are the same for encouraging native plant enthusiasts. This book makes a handy and inexpensive resource for the favorite school library, teacher, or youth leader in your life.

THE GARDENS' GROUP

The Gardens' Group is Mississippi's non-profit organization whose specific goal is to support public gardens and garden education. Members are home gardeners and enthusiasts, horticulturalists, landscape architects, native plant society and garden club members, commercial nurserymen, educators, and professionals.

The Gardens' Group motto is "Many hands make work light." The group helps identify problems in public gardens, and works to solve them through restoration, creating new areas of interest, and involving many diverse groups with expertise and manpower.

Funds raised are used to provide matching grants for worthy projects. They have worked to establish and fund the Jackson Zoo's Butterfly Garden, the adjacent Wildflower Meadow around Livingston Park (see article on Nature Trail and Habitat Study area), the MNPS Native Plant Garden at Mynelle Gardens (4736 Clinton Blvd., Jackson), and the Doctor's Herb Garden at the Agriculture Museum.

The group sponsors free garden tours, hand-on workshops, volunteer service work, and plant sales. A fall seminar is provided annually. Past speakers have included Edith Eddleman, noted perennial expert from North Carolina and Bill Welch, Texas author of Perennial Garden Color. This year, the speaker is Jim Wilson, a native Mississippian of PBS Victory Garden fame, on November 16th. (See Calendar).

Practical education pamphlets are being prepared. The first, "Gardening for Butterflies", was distributed at the nature trail dedication August 17th. Copies are available at MNPS

meetings, and may be obtained through the Gardens' Group or the Jackson Zoo.

The Gardens' Group also has been instrumental in organizing a display of mostly native plant species that have survived from ancient times in association with the Dinosaurs Alive exhibit. Teaching materials also have been provided to area schoolteachers. Check the Jackson newspapers for details.

At present, the Gardens' Group has no membership fees or dues. Fund-raising plant sales and contributions have so far met funding needs. Individuals with enthusiasm, gardening talents, skill with encouraging others, and interested in fun are warmly welcomed. For more information about the Gardens' Group contact Felder Rushing at 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, MS 39211 (601) 982-6541

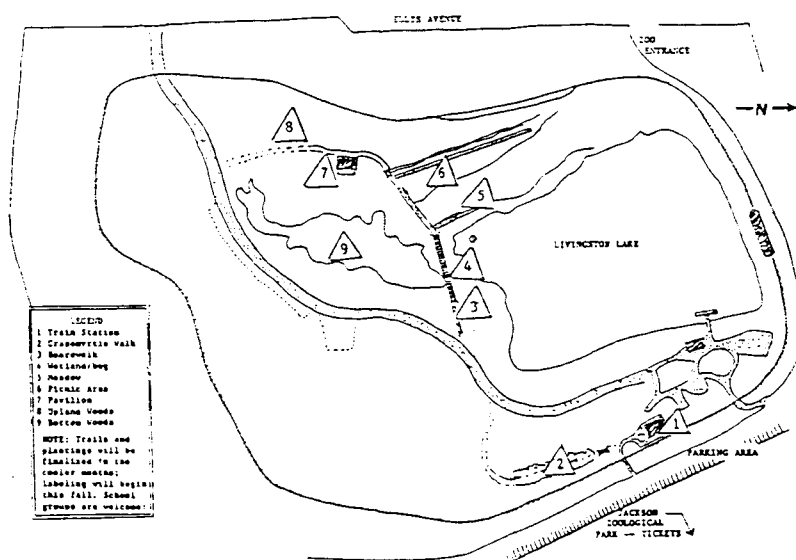
NATURE TRAIL AND HABITAT STUDY AREA Dedication August 17, 1991

Began as an alternative method of study for school wildflower collections, this newly-constructed trail fits into the proposed master plan of the Livingston Park area of the zoo. This past spring, members of the Gardens' Group accompanied students on a single afternoon around the lake, during which the students collected their entire wildflower collection -- without diminishing the natural stands of annuals and perennials. Hopefully, this can become a major way students can learn about not only the many spring wildflowers, but also those of fall and summer. In addition, they can learn about habitats, and why certain plants do well there.

The boardwalk and bridges were built by volunteers, and paid for with a grant from the Gardens' Group. The long-range plans include more use of the pavilion, picnic areas, labeled plants (including trees for leaf collections), and demonstrations. Each of the major habitats will be treated with a descriptive sign, and planted with typical species.

Wetland species include Louisiana Iris, cattails, amsonia, spider lily, mallows, lizard tail, cardinal flower, Joe Pye weed, iron weed, and others. Meadow plants include rudbeckias, coneflowers, asters, grasses, goldenrod, boltonia, and coreopsis, our state's official wildflower. There are many, many others. Woods plants include dwarf crested iris, phlox, sorrel, pine lily, trillium, Jack-in-the-pulpit, several showy ferns, and many flowering shrubs native to our state.

This is only the beginning, and we appreciate your enthusiasm and assistance. For more information, or ways you can help, contact the zoo office.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 1-3 Florence, AL, Meriwether Lewis Park, Natchez Trace, and Davy Crocket State Park. Meeting sponsored by Alabama Wildflower Society-Muscle Shoals Chapter. Contact Mrs. T.F. Hall, P.O. Box 68, Sheffield, AL 35660. For more information about Alabama Wildflower Society activities and nearby AWS Chapters in Tuscaloosa and Mobile, contact George Wood, 11120 Ben Clements Road, Northport, AL 35476. (205) 339-2541

NOVEMBER 2 8:30-12:30 PM. Univ. So. Miss., Long Beach, MS. Ed Blake, the Crosby Arboretum Director, put together a 1/2 day seminar on the current state of affairs of Southern gardening to highlight the very best plants for Southern gardeners. For registration to this unique seminar, contact the Crosby Arboretum, 3702 Hardy St., Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

NOVEMBER 9 Jackson, MS. 8 AM-4 PM. MSU Shortcourse on backyard wildlife management. To be held at the Hinds Co. Extension Auditorium, Wilson Blvd. \$25. (\$20 for early registration) Call Will Cohen, MSU Wildlife Ext. Specialist at 325-3174 for details.

NOVEMBER 10 The Golden Triangle Area Sierra Club is sponsoring a family outing to the Dismals Canyon in Alabama--site of some interesting ferns and other plants that rarely occur this far south. The group will meet at the Leigh Mall Sears Store in Columbus, MS at 10:00 AM. Bring a pack lunch. For more information, contact Forest Ponder (601) 323-8151

NOVEMBER 16 Public Broadcasting System Fund-Raising Program. Jim Wilson will be at Mississippi ETV Studio, 3825 Ridgewood Road (corner of Lakeland Drive) in Jackson. Be a part of the studio audience (\$15.00 donation to PBS), or come to the lecture afterwards (\$10.00 donation to PBS). Tickets should be reserved in advance by calling Mississippi ETV (982-6565, Virginia Nutt 982-6241 for tickets, or Felder Rushing 982-6541). The tentative schedule, subject to change, is as follows:

- 12:30-1:00 Victory Garden on Mississippi ETV.
- 1:00-2:00 MS ETV Call-in program with Jim Wilson and Felder Rushing. Limited seating in the TV studio.
- 2:30-3:30 Guest lecture on low-input gardening by Jim Wilson. He also will discuss his forthcoming book "Landscaping with Wildflowers" and answer questions from the audience.

NOVEMBER 23 Crosby Arboretum, Picayune, MS. Dedication of a memorial to Mary Land, Louisiana nature writer and poet. For more information, call (601) 798-6961.

FEBRUARY 5-9, 1992. Mississippi Academy of Sciences Annual Meeting, MS Beach Resort Hotel, Biloxi. Contact (601) 977-0627 for details.

FEBRUARY 11, 18, and 25, 1992. From 6:00-9:00 PM, and one daytime Saturday field trip. Home Landscape Design Workshop, Starkville, MS. With Ed Martin, Landscape Architecture Dept., Miss. State Univ. (601) 325-2674. Fee \$100. Continuing education credit available.

SPRING 1992. MNPS Weekend Field Trip. Date and time to be announced in the first issue of 1992. Suggestions for a location are welcome.

JUNE 8-12, 15-19, 22-26, 1992. Landscape School of the South. Three Louisiana State Univ. Short Courses to be held in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, LA. Contact LSU (504) 388-6621, (800) 256-6948 or Neil Odenwald (504) 388-1434. Fee \$390. Register by May 1, 1992.

AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER 1992. Jackson. MS. 6th Annual Mississippi Native Plant Society Conference. Details to be announced in a future issue.

OCTOBER 3rd Wednesday 9:00 AM-12:30 PM 37th Annual Landscape Design seminar, Mississippi State. Contact Ed Martin, Dept. Landscape Architecture, (601) 325-2674 for details.

OCTOBER 1992. Nacogdoches, Texas. Symposium on east Texas timberlands and its many ecosystems. Nontechnical presentations, with accompanying manuscripts to be published in an edited proceedings, are being solicited to gain understanding of this region's native plants and their habitats. This is one part of an 11-year series to present a paradigm for the study of Texas native flora. For more information, contact Dana Tucker, Native Plant Society of Texas Coordinator (512) 863-7794.

Butterflies are more than just beautiful, delicate creatures which carry pollen from flower to flower. As their caterpillars eat plants, they and the adults become an important source of food for birds and other insects. They are also strong symbols -- good numbers of butterflies show that nature's balance is right.



ATTRACTING BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR LANDSCAPE

An open lawn has little to offer butterflies, which need shelter, water, and food. Shrubs, trees, and even grassy meadows offer shelter for adult butterflies and food for caterpillars.



ABOUT THE NOMINEES:

Vic Rudis is a Research Forester with the USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis Unit, Southern Forest Experiment Station. He served as MNPS Editor 1990-91 and Secretary/Treasurer 1988-89. He and his wife Mary (who has helped in innumerable ways) live in Starkville.

Randy Winstead is an Instructor, Magnolia Bible College, Kosciusko, MS. He received his MS degree in Botany in 1990 under Sidney McDaniel.

Sherrie Wiygul is a teacher with the Biology Dept. at Starkville High School. She is active with the Oktibbeha Audubon Society and served as MNPS Secretary/Treasurer 1990-91. Sherrie and her husband Glen (who also pitches in from time-to-time) live in Sturgis.

Roger Danley and Becky Gillette live in Hattiesburg. Becky is a freelance writer and Roger is a chemist with a hydroelectric power station. They reside in a home partially sheltered by the earth. They are active with reproducing mayhaw cultivars, "negative" landscaping (seeing what nature provides and removing unwanted species), and the Southern Fruit Fellowship.

BALLOT

Please fill out your ballot and mail to:
Mississippi Native Plant Society, Attn: Ballot/Nominations
P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759
Check at left and fill out as appropriate.

___President: Victor A. Rudis, Starkville

___ _____(specify)

___Vice-President: Randy Winstead, Kosciusko

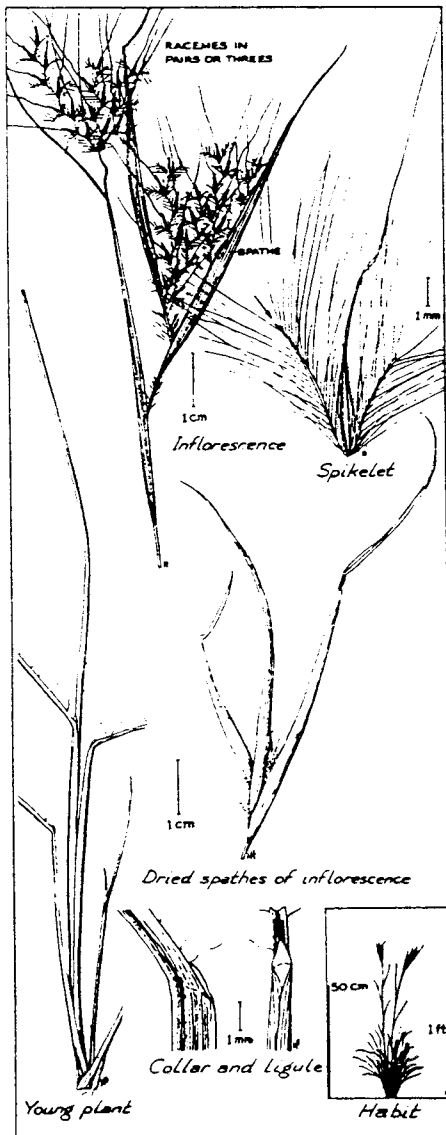
___ _____(specify)

___Secretary-Treasurer: Sherrie Wiygul, Sturgis

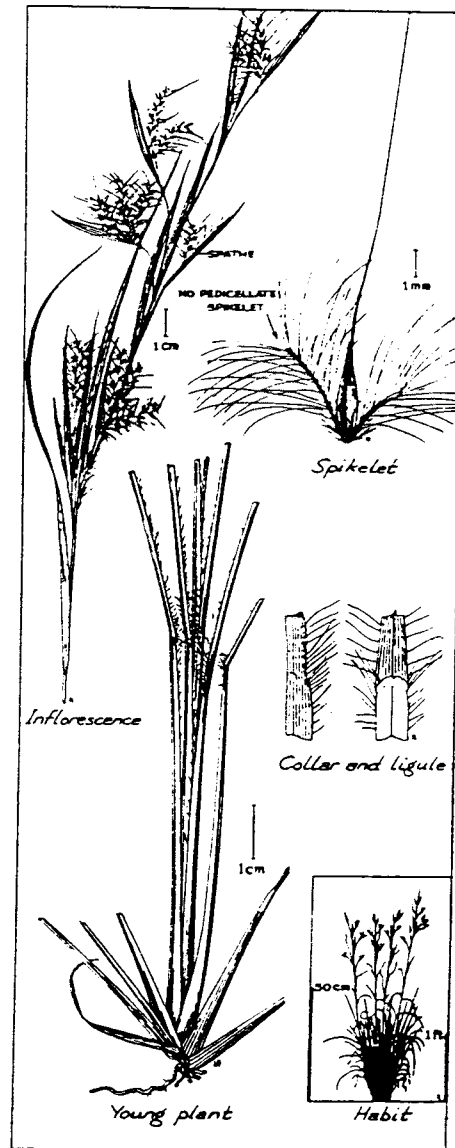
___ _____(specify)

___Editor: Roger Danley and Becky Gillette, Hattiesburg

___ _____(specify)



Fineleaf Bluestem—*Andropogon subtenius* Nash



Broomsedge Bluestem—*Andropogon virginicus* L.

Mississippi Sierra Club, Mississippi Nature Conservancy, and similar groups.

-- Lectures, seminars, and slide shows by native plant experts, ecologists, landscape professionals, knowledgeable amateurs, and gardeners.

-- Offer Wildflowers of Mississippi by S. Lee Timme, T-shirts, and related materials for sale to promote the goals of the Society.

-- Facilitating the study of Mississippi flora and monitoring of nature preserves through newsletter announcements, networking with concerned and knowledgeable members, and awarding small grants to support research and education consistent with the Society's goals.

-- Plant and seed exchanges, creating and maintaining displays for public education and appreciation, and plant rescues in areas about to be developed.

NEWSLETTER AND MEMBERSHIP

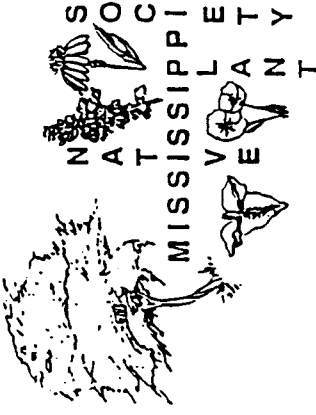
The MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER is published 4 times annually. In addition to a calendar of upcoming events, the newsletter contains articles on native plant propagation and identification, notes on plant and seed exchanges, landscape design, habitat preserves and descriptions, reviews of books, activities, and people associated with native and naturalized plants of Mississippi.

Membership is open to any interested individual, family, or organization. If you wish to join us, please mail the application below, indicate the class of membership desired and enclose appropriate dues.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DUES NOTICE	
Renewal	New
Please indicate class of membership desired and enclose appropriate dues.	
☐ Student \$2.50	☐ The Mississippi Native Plant Society is an organization dedicated to the scientific and educational exchange of information about native and naturalized plants occurring in the state of Mississippi.
☐ Regular \$5.00	
☐ Family \$7.50	
☐ Sustaining \$10.00	
☐ Contributing \$25.00	
☐ Life \$75.00	
All classes of membership receive the MNPS Newsletter. Please make checks payable to: Mississippi Native Plant Society. Return this form with payment to: Mississippi Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759.	
Be sure to include the following information with your payment:	
Name	_____
Mailing Address	_____
Telephone No. (optional)	_____
If Mississippi, county of residence	_____

1990-1991 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Sidney McDaniel, Mississippi State 325-7570
VICE-PRESIDENT: Chris Wells, Piquette 798-6961
SECRETARY/TREASURER: Sherrie Wiygul, Sturgis 465-8603
EDITOR: Vic Rudis, Starkville 324-0430
PAST PRESIDENT: Felder Rushing, Jackson 982-6541



New T-Shirts and a new design are being prepared by Susan Halton, Bob Brusek and Lynn Ashford. But for now, we still have Adult medium and Adult small T-shirts in the current style. And a few in Youth small and medium sizes. (Silver grey only.) \$8.50 +1.50 shipping.

NOTE: Consider renewing early. The new rates to take effect January 1, 1992 are as follows:

- \$ 5.00 Student
- \$ 7.50 Individual or family
- \$ 10.00 Sustaining
- \$ 25.00 Contributing
- \$125.00 Life

Life members will receive a copy of Wildflowers of Mississippi by S. Lee Timme. Others may purchase the softcover edition for \$19.50 + 2.50 shipping. Allow 4 weeks for delivery.

Address sales and newsletter items to: Vic Rudis, Editor, Mississippi Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759.

NOTE: MAILING LABELS with "FINAL ISSUE" have been marked for deletion. For those interested in continuing to receive the newsletter and share in membership, send dues to: Mississippi Native Plant Society, c/o Sherrie Wiygul, Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759



MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 2151
STARKVILLE, MS 39759

As a result of a meeting called by Fred Searcy, Jr. on April 19, 1980 at the Museum of Natural History in Jackson, the Mississippi Native Plant Society drew its first breath. The organization was formed for individuals and groups interested in all aspects of botany, particularly the vascular flora of Mississippi.

There always have been people with a love for the native plants of Mississippi. The overall purpose of the Mississippi Native Plant Society is the furtherance of knowledge about the native and naturalized plant species of the State of Mississippi and the encouragement of an attitude of respect and appreciation for these species.

GOALS are to:

- Gather and disseminate knowledge about the native and naturalized plant species and their habitats in Mississippi
- Work for the preservation of these species and conservation of their habitats
- Inform the public about these species and habitats, including their propagation, importance, ecology, and need for protection
- Encourage the propagation and use of native plants and habitats in designing residential, commercial, and public landscapes
- Promote fellowship among all persons interested in the understanding and appreciation of native plants and their habitats

PROGRAMS include:

- Field trips. In past years, Mississippi locations have included Ocean Springs, Crosby Arboretum, Davis Lake, Tishomingo State Park, Delta National Forest, Starkville, Horn Island and Gloster. Joint meetings are sponsored with the Alabama Wildflower Society.