



Gaillardia

Oklahoma Native Plant Society

The purpose of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society is to encourage the study, protection, propagation, appreciation and use of Oklahoma's native plants.

Volume 39, Number 2
Summer 2024

INSIDE THIS EDITION

ONPS Board Members	2
President's Message	2
Chapter News	3
Welcome New Members	3
Contributions	3
ONPS Wonders of Wildflowers	4-5
The Spanish Dagger.....	6-7
Color Oklahoma	8
Oklahoma Native Plant Network Update	9
Henry's Garden.....	10-11
Staying Home with Nature	12
Meet the Members: Patrick Bell.....	13-14
Bristow Brimming with Wildflowers	14
Membership/Renewal Form	15
Vol. 22 OK Native Plant Record Order Form	15



A Buckeye butterfly nectars on our state wildflower, Indian Blanket, *Gaillardia pulchella* at Lake Massena. Photo by Lynn Michael

Upcoming Events/Activities

(check the ONPS website or Facebook for more details)

- Jun 8 - Plant Walk** (see page 3)
- Jun 21 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays** (details below)
- Jun 22 - NE Chapter booth at Garden Deva in Tulsa**
- Jul 6 - Plant Walk** (see page 3)
- July 19 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays** (details below)
- Aug 16 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays** (details below)
- Sep 5 - Central Chapter meeting, 6:30 socializing and 7 pm program at OCU Dawson-Loeffler Building**
- Sep 9 - NE Chapter meeting, 6:30 socializing and program at 7 pm at the Tulsa Garden Center**
- Sep 20 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays** (details below)
- Sep 21 - Monarchs on the Mountain, ONPN booth, Tulsa, OK**
- Sep 28 - ONPN Fall Sale and workshops at the OSU Extension Center in Oklahoma City.**

Mark your calendars to attend Oklahoma Native Plant Society's Annual meeting. This year we will again have our meeting in conjunction with the Oklahoma Academy of Science. Save the dates October 4-6, 2024 and look for details in the next newsletter. Group camping will be available, as well as lodge rooms at Roman Nose State Park.

Central Chapter, 6:30 pm socializing and 7:00 pm meeting at Oklahoma City University in the Dawson-Loeffler Science Center, Room 208.

NE Chapter, 6:30 pm socializing and 7:00 pm meeting at Tulsa Garden Center, Helmerich Building, 2435 S Peoria Ave, Tulsa

Fabulous Wildflower Fridays, 3rd Friday monthly, 5:30 pm, casual, at Panera Bread, 5601 E 41st Street, Tulsa

Preview Chapter meeting topics inside. All members are invited to all meetings, including board meetings, and are encouraged to bring guests.

Gaillardia

Published quarterly by the
Oklahoma Native Plant Society
P. O. Box 14274, Tulsa OK 74159

President	Shalini Chitturi
Vice-president	Juliette Hulen
Secretary	Debbie Drinko
Treasurer	Mary Korthase
Past-President	Patrick Bell

Directors at Large:

2024: Dennis Martin and Janet Thomas
2025: Nancy Truelove and Kathy Kuhns-Marino
2026: Andrea Schultz-Farriester & Joe Roberts

Chapter Chairs:

Theresa Turner	Northeast
Micah Friedman	Central

Committee Chairs:

Historian	Fran Stallings
Publicity and Merchandise	Barbara Klein
Betty Kemm Award	Sue Amstutz
Awards	Constance Murray
Mailings/Printings	Sandy Graue
Membership	Sandy Graue
Native Plant Record	Gloria Caddell
Webmaster	Adam Ryburn
<i>Gaillardia</i> Editor	Lynn Michael
Color Oklahoma	Monica Bartling

Conservation Committee and statewide Tulsa Garden
Center Liaison positions retired.

ONPS website:

www.oknativeplants.org

ONPS email:

ONPSinfo@gmail.com

Gaillardia News email:

ONPSGaillardia@gmail.com

Gaillardia articles, except those reprinted here with
permission from other sources, may be reprinted at will.
Please acknowledge source and author.

Send all mail, except *Gaillardia* material, to:

Oklahoma Native Plant Society
P. O. Box 14274
Tulsa, OK 74159
ONPSinfo@gmail.com

President's Message

By Shalini Chitturi, ONPS President

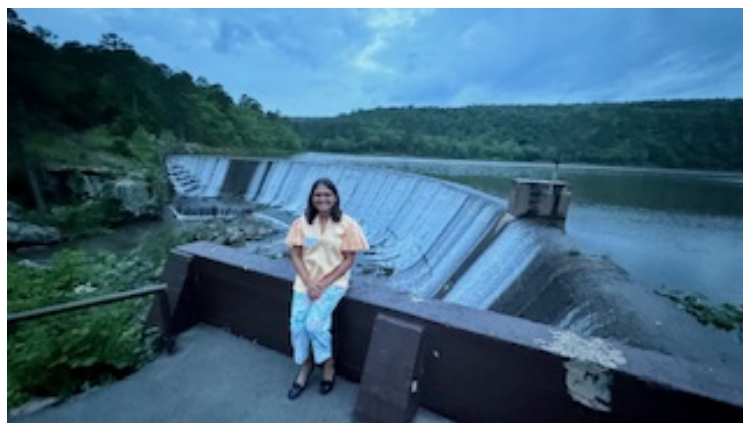
The spring is warming up really quickly, as if it skipped a grade this year. The heavy winds bringing in rains, while the plants awaken in green everywhere. The spring flowers enticing the early butterflies and bees for their vital life dances. The tiny birds silently building their nests, as they whisper in secret sounds.

I am so excited to let you all know that there are more and more people who are getting interested in Native plants. I have attended the Stash event in Norman. It was such a happy thing to see that most of the Native plants were sold out in a couple of hours. The place was packed with people who were wanting to know about Natives. I felt like it was about time for this change. It is about time that we do our job in preserving our own native flora and fauna.

We just returned from Wonders of Wildflowers event in Robbers Cave State Park. It was an amazing event! We botanized and enjoyed the serene surroundings of the park. You can enjoy the details of our WOW event in a separate article of mine.

As you all enjoy the sunny outdoors, please take a minute to smell the natives, stare at the wild flowers, trail the monarch or a swallowtail and listen to the hidden bird songs. And maybe, maybe even dream of a small native haven for yourself, in your own back yard.

Shalini



Shalini at Lake Carlton Dam during the Wonders of Wildflowers event at Robbers Cave State Park. Photo by Ram Chitturi

Central Chapter Update*Micah Friedman, Chair*

June 8 Plant Walk: Learning Plant Families
Meeting at 9 am at the front entrance of the Belle Isle Library, 5501 N Villa Ave, Oklahoma City, OK 73112

We will traverse to the creek behind the library to look at plants. We will focus on using plant family characteristics to help identify plants.

July 6 Plant Walk: Botany in the City

We will meet at 9 am in front of Shoe Carnival, 1701 Belle Isle Blvd, Oklahoma City, OK 73118.

We will caravan to the Deep Fork River, which is 0.5 miles from the meeting spot.

Welcome New Members**Added 2/1/24 thru 5/1/24**

Becky Schaller

Jason Wiggins

Marisa Szubryt

Joyce & Scott Friedman

Jeri Fleming & Mike Langston

Caitlin Bearskin

Delilah Kinsey

Brandi Buys

Chandra Johnson

Leah Melton

Rachel Guyot

Cyle Corbell

Brett Yeakey & Joey Ramirez

Cooper Vaughn

Cynthia & Keith Boyd

Katy Baldrachi

Emly Grippando

Kay Smith

Melissa Hicks

Ron & Nancy Scoggins

Kelly & Abigail Keefer

CONTRIBUTIONS**Anne W. Long Fund**

Marcia Castellanos,

in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Color Oklahoma Donations

Pearl Garrison;

Barry & Melanie K Redlinger

General Fund

Dave & Ean Barbier; Arlene Fazio;

Ben Barbier & family

in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Kelly Pearson in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Jana Winfree in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Wyatt Ballenger in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Vokral family in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Sara Young in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Mark Gower in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Garrett Aldridge in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Thomas Schwarz in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Madeline Ley in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Anonymous in memory of Mark Wegrzynski

Northeast Chapter Update*Theresa Turner, Chapter Chair*

Location change: Still meeting at the Tulsa Garden Center, but in the Helmerich Center instead of the ballroom.

Booths were manned at SpringFest, Earth Fest and Tulsa Audubon Backyard Habitat Tour. Next booth at Garden Deva on June 22, to help launch their new collection featuring native plants.

The May meeting was canceled due to extreme weather, and the speaker, Jack Tichener has been rescheduled for the September 9th meeting.

WOW at Robbers Cave

Article and photos by Shalini Chitturi

We drove east on last Friday, crossing the beautiful country side with untouched pastures until we reached the Robbers Cave State Park. Where the ‘Wonders of the Wildflowers’ (WOW) event was held this year.

We were just in time for Mr. Ledford’s talk at the intriguing restaurant “Look Out Kitchen”. It was nestled beside a beautiful lake looking out to a stunning view, true to its name. The restaurant with its entrance and interiors catches your attention. I was so happy to see many of the ONPS members. We completed our dinner knowing about history of Robbers Cave and the details of the WOW activities.



We drove to the lodge and settle down in our room. It was a very spacious and clean room. I woke up after a restful night, made myself a cup of coffee and stepped out of the back door. It was the most stunning view! The tall trees, bordering the rocky valley in front of me, the sun was barely coming up as the clouds were hustling in greys. I spent a lot of time enjoying that mystical dawn, all by myself on that patio. The trees swaying in the warm winds made sure that I received all the distinct greetings of the birds that morning.

We divided into a couple of groups for the plant trips, that were arranged as per the difficulty of the trails. Coincidentally, both our plant trips of the

day were with Gus. We botanized under the maples, hickories, pines and sycamores as Gus taught us about multiple plants along the trail.

We reached the small cave, which was well hidden, making it a perfect hide out for the outlaws! This trip was also special because we got to see a very special fern that was endemic to Robbers Cave only.

The cave grounds filled with my chatter as I tried to find a name for our group. Probably call ourselves “Invasive outlaws” or “Non Native rebels”. Patrick suggested and explained to me why we should be called “Non native Posses”

We later drove for a few miles and found more cool plants like the 4 leaf milkweed and the gorgeous jewel flower by the road.



We assembled for lunch under a shelter by the lake. The sign “Outdoor Classroom” pointed towards a wooden bridge that led to a hidden cabana. The bridge was bordered by many maples, sycamores and water lily pads all along the lake. Ram and I enjoyed our lunch under the beautiful cabana.

We went on our next trip with Gus again. At the beginning of the trail, we were greeted by the distinct sounds of an Indigo Bunting. He stayed there, chirping away, as we all enjoyed his stark beauty. We went on the trail and learned about many more plants. We reached a small crossing of the brook, rapidly rumbling over the slippery rocks. It was a beautiful area filled with very unique royal ferns.



On our way back, we saw the beautiful fiery red Tanager singing in the high branches. We all drove to a pasture by the road and spent time admiring the castillejas, dandelions, coreopsis, baptisias, spiderworts and milkweeds!



We returned back to our rooms to retire for the afternoon. The evening was relaxing as we all hung out at dinner in the lookout kitchen. Ram and I went for a small walk and stumbled on this beautiful dam and the overflow area. The water sounds flowing down this lunar shaped steep, and the rocks beneath, only added to the mystique of the dusky glow from the sunset. (Photo on Page 2)

I later went to the hospitality room to discuss about the board meeting for the next morning. We also updated ourselves about the severe storms that were creating havoc in the city. The news

confirmed tornado warnings in Tuttle, Norman, Seminole and Ardmore areas by then. I checked the weather for our area, texted some friends to be safe and tried to sleep.

The next day brought in a lot of rain, as I got ready for the board meeting. The Board meeting was held in the hospitality room, Zoom was connected and many joined us virtually as well. We discussed very important agendas, some of them will steer ONPS in reaching out to younger members also, towards an eco friendly approach for events. Also in effectively communicating with the policy makers about proper preservation of native flora and fauna.

After the meeting, we all talked about the damage that multiple tornadoes caused in various towns of Oklahoma. Our hearts went out to everyone who was affected by the storms, both near and far. We checked our own travel paths and started our journeys back in time. Robbers Cave surely etched a beautiful memory in my heart.



The Spanish Dagger

Article and Photos by Becky Emerson Carlberg

Behold the mighty Yucca plant. You're looking at a member of the asparagus family in the subfamily Agave that includes *Agave azul* and *Agave salmiana*, major ingredients in tequila and mezcal. Call them evergreen herbs or shrubs that go for sun. Depending on how taxonomists sort the Yuccas using leaf size, firmness and width, we'll go with three native species of Yuccas that grow in Oklahoma. Two are more partial to the western half of Oklahoma. One species limits itself to TX, AR and OK.

Harriman's Yucca (*Yucca Harrimaniae*) forms a rosette of sharp leaves with curly white filaments along the edges. One reason it is called the Spanish bayonet. The leaf blades are considered grass-like, soft and flexible. This is definitely a western Yucca, growing in NM, AZ, CO, NV, UT and OK. From a rather short 6 inches to 3 feet in height, this Yucca pretty much resists most things: deer, drought, dry soil, poor soil, erosion, heat, and salt.

Soapweed Yucca (*Yucca glauca*) is a Great Plains Yucca that grows on prairies, dry upland sites, old fields, along roadsides and abandoned home plots. It is found in AR, CO, IA, KS, MO, MN, ND, NE, NM, OK, SD, TX, WY plus

Alberta and Saskatchewan Provinces in Canada. The more Soapweed Yucca is disturbed or grazed (what eats this Yucca?), the more Yuccas are produced. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildlife Center describes the wiry leaves as pale green and dagger-like. The plant is large, over 4 feet wide and high.

Soapweed Yucca roots contain saponins used as a soap (had you figured that out?) for washing hair or clothes, plus it kills lice and helps prevent hair loss and dandruff. The multi-purpose roots also treat stomach aches, broken bones, inflammation and bleeding. Everybody should have this plant growing in their yard. You'd never need to visit the pharmacy again!

While livestock ignore Soapweed, Yucca, pocket gophers do enjoy eating the roots. Hummingbirds and butterflies visit the flowers for the nectar. This Yucca is host plant to the giant skipper butterfly caterpillars and offers cover to quail, lesser prairie chickens, small mammals and reptiles. Just so you know (if there's nothing else to eat) mice, rats, squirrels, and rabbits do eat the leaves. Coyotes have been known to eat the fruit.



This leaves the Arkansas Yucca (*Yucca arkansana*) with leaf blades somewhat between being grass-like and wiry. A plant that can grow from 30 inches to six feet or taller. Leaves also have curly white fibers. This Yucca only lives in AR, TX, OK, southeast KS and southern MO. As do other Yuccas, the Arkansas Yucca has a taproot several feet long in addition to substantial rhizomes that turn upward to form additional rosettes. One plant appears to house a colony of Yuccas. Woody flower stalks grow from the rosettes.

All Yucca flower buds are first erect, but the heavy flowers soon droop to face the ground. Each bell-shaped flower (2"x2" in the case of the Arkansas Yucca) has six greenish white tepals (sepals and petals together) and pollen packets below the ovary. Only the Yucca moth (*Tegeticula* or *Parategeticula* sp.) can pollinate Yucca flowers. Each species of Yucca has its own corresponding Yucca moth. The plant and the insect are totally dependent upon each other.

At nighttime, the small white male and female moths mate on the Yucca blossom, then the female's work begins. She collects the pollen from the bloom into a ball using her mouth palps that resemble thin fingers. This moth does not have a long tongue as other moths. She will then transfer the pollen ball to a different plant's flower. If she detects no other eggs, then she will lay her eggs in the ovary and deposit the pollen on the female stigma. This assures the fertilization of the flower, formation of fruit and enough seeds to feed her larvae.



The larvae become fully grown in weeks. Time for the caterpillars to drop and bury themselves in the ground before making a cocoon. They remain in dormancy for a year or two, depending on when the Yucca blooms.

Yucca fruit, flowers, and stems are edible. Peeling the immature fruit will eliminate the bitter skin. The flowers can be eaten raw or dried and crushed as a flavoring. The white inner portion of the flowering stem can be peeled, cooked and eaten. Fibers from leaves are used to make ropes, mats and baskets. The leaves can be used as a paint brush or broom. You already know the roots are used to make a soap.

For a plant that provides year-round interest in the garden, re-blooms (but often not the next year), comes in nearly 50 species (many produce edible fruit) and is a master of water conservation, then the state flower of New Mexico is not only the flower but plant for you!

COLOR OKLAHOMA

Article and photo by Monica Bartling, Color Oklahoma Chair



It's early spring and the late winter rain and mild temperatures have been perfect for beautiful wildflowers across Oklahoma. Color Oklahoma (CO) provided grants to six sites last August with planting in early to late December.

The Waurika and Okemah sites are featured in the photos shown with this article. This is the sixth year for partnering with ODOT to plant wildflowers in Waurika and Jefferson County and the first year for planting in Okemah. The Jefferson County flowers are beautiful this year and the Okemah planting has great promise for late spring and early summer flowers to come. Both sites have completed applications for winter 2024 plantings.

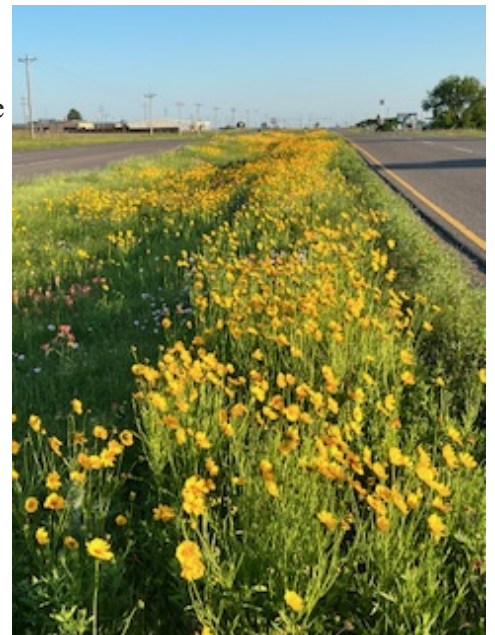
Based on early applications, it seems that our 2024 grants requests will be several times what we've had in recent years, which means we will have more flowers planted across the state adding 2025 color and additional food for our pollinators.

The CO board is working diligently to streamline the application process and provide training for all our board members to be mentors to provide guidance for plant selection, locations and funding across Oklahoma.

For those who may not know our funding comes from the sale of Wildflower License Plates purchased through the Department of Motor Vehicles for Oklahoma. License plates are an additional \$40 of which CO receives \$20 per year for each plate purchased. If you order on-line there is also a small processing and mailing fee, but you can order through your local tag agent to avoid those fees.

We recently welcomed two new Board Members. Kristy Lesley is the City Manager for the City of Okemah and Sandy Graue, is a name known to most ONPS members as she is the membership chairman.

CO board members championed a bill with OK District 31 Senator, Chris Kidd to make April Native Plant Month in Oklahoma in perpetuity. We were excited in February when the bill received 100% approval of the Senate Ag Committee and we picked up a bi-partisan sponsor in the Senate and a champion in the House. However, the bill did not make it to the Senate Floor for a vote. There's always next year and another opportunity to get this important legislation passed.



Photos top left and right: Early spring photos taken north of the U.S. 81 and U.S. 70 intersection in Waurika (Jefferson County) Oklahoma.

Photo at bottom left: The Color Oklahoma Board met in Okemah, OK for our quarterly on April 30. Shown from left are: Pearl Garrison, Kristy Lesley, Sandy Graue, Dr. Ron Tyrl, Joe Roberts, Lynn Michael, ODOT Okfuskee County Superintendent, Joe Bradley; and Monica Bartling. Not shown is board member Dennis Martin, who took the photo.

OKLAHOMA NATIVE PLANT NETWORK UPDATE

Article and Photos by Marilyn Stewart

What is ONPN and why was this group formed? The short answer is that we need more growers producing native plants! ONPN is under the umbrella of ONPS and while both are fierce advocates for native plants, the focus of ONPN is to educate the public about the whys of native plants and therefore increase demand. With more demand there will be more growers and more plants for the landscape industry, homeowners, and wildlife.

We are making progress! In little more than a year we have sponsored a fall event in OKC with workshops and growers that drew well over a thousand people. At least three thousand showed

up and wiped out the vendor's plants at our April native plant sale in Norman and as Joe Roberts said, "this place looks like the toilet paper aisle during covid". We are also making headway with an online plant availability program to connect professional landscapers and landscape architects with growers.

We have chosen 15 native plants to highlight, and growers can purchase our beautiful specially designed tags for these species with the ONPN logo and information specific to Oklahoma.

How can you help? Support your local native plant growers and if you do visit a "regular" nursery ask if they have any native plants, be nice but firm as you encourage them to offer our native species and not cultivars. Nurseries will only carry the products people ask for, so it is vital they know there is a demand. Increased demand means more growers, more native plants, and that benefits us all. You can also join ONPN or make a donation at ONPN.org



Upcoming events include:

- *A propagation workshop for professionals and those looking to start a nursery is in the works for this summer.
- *ONPN will have a presence at Monarchs on the Mountain on September 21 in Tulsa.
- *September 28 will be our fall sale and workshops in OKC at the OSU Extension Center

The Anne Long Award and the Betty Kemm Service Award nominations are both due August 31st. We have people who are worthy of these awards, but they must be nominated. Send your nomination for the Anne Long Award to Connie Murray and your nomination for the Betty Kemm Service Award to Sue Amstutz by August 31st.

HENRY'S GARDEN

Article and photos by Juliette Hulen

Henry's Garden is a gift to the kids of the neighborhood.

Thanks to a grant from the Henry McBride Memorial Fund in partnership with Native Plants Nursery, Sweetleaf, and Crown Heights-Edgemere Heights Neighborhood Association, a 3,600 square-foot wildlife habitat and learning garden was created along historic Crown Heights Park trail system.



Sweetleaf began work in June 2023 at an old wildflower patch that still contained native species hidden within clumps of invasive Johnson grass. Sweetleaf rescued and repurposed beneficial plants in the new design. This included swaths of *Asclepias syriaca* 'Common milkweed which were left in place where were found. These plants helped to guide where footpaths and bed lines would meet.

All prep work, concept lines, and hardscapes were finished by the end of June. The garden was completed September 14, 2023, after postponing the planting phase to avoid plant stress from the summer heat.

The area will eventually include informational placards to describe the importance of ecological landscaping, Oklahoma native plants, and biodiversity.

Plant material was sourced through Native Plants Nursery. Additionally, The Conservation District and Wild Things Nursery supplied 144 plants. Sweetleaf provided the design and installation, as well as ongoing maintenance and native plant consulting services.

In total, over 1,600 Oklahoma native plants were introduced: 1,025 graminoids, 550 forbs, and 33 wood stems.





Asclepias syriaca 'Common milkweed'
LEFT IN PLACE



sweetleafokc



September 2023



September 2023

Staying Home with Nature

by Katie Huskerson

Oklahoma Native Plant Network PR and Communications Chair

Our second Oklahoma Native Plant Network featured plant for 2024 is *Passiflora incarnata*, A.K.A. Maypop, passionflower or passion vine. Its intricate and delicate details make it hard to believe they are indigenous to Oklahoma. The fruit makes a loud “pop” sound when they are crushed as you open them to enjoy the edible pulp. For propagation, they can be grown by seed or by digging up suckers and growing them on from cuttings. Thanks to a growing population of home nurseries and larger operations that are cultivating more Oklahoma native plants, we all have plenty of opportunities to bring one or a few of these into your home habitats, school gardens and community co-ops this upcoming growing season. To view our Resources Directory to find a grower near you visit <https://www.onpn.org/resource-directory>.

In seasons preceding the fall of 2018, my family and I loved to walk by and enjoy a neighbor’s garden that my youngest daughter dubbed “The Butterfly House”. From the earliest blooms to the first freeze, we would take a detour on our way to the park to glimpse the riotous flutterers dancing around the yard. We were thrilled when the opportunity to be the next stewards of that garden and home came our way. In the spring of 2020, we slowed down and stayed home. This time allowed us to get closely acquainted with the garden we had become caretakers of. We found ways to explore and adventure within our urban island.



One plant that emerged was *Passiflora incarnata*. Two vines sprang up on the South facing side of our 1908 bungalow and we laced twine for them to climb up following the path of nails previously driven into the brick pillars. We watched the tendrils grow and stretch. We witnessed a green rainbow forming at a glacial pace and it was thrilling when the two vines joined in the middle. What followed was a summer of entertainment, courtesy of an onslaught of spiky orange caterpillars that we learned were Gulf Fritillaries. They ate, they pooped, they ate some more. We watched dozens of them pupate. We found chrysalis attached to little brick ledges, under chairs and on the rim of clay pots. We monitored each day to see who might emerge. We delighted in watching them take flight.

Life and all the activities it has to offer is back to moving at an ever quickening pace. However, the summer my family spent getting to know our passion vine exists in a place that reminds me to slow down, tune into curiosity and get caught up in the wonder of staying home with nature. Our native plants and the creatures they nourish have so many marvels to reveal if we allow ourselves the time to experience them.

MEET THE MEMBERS: Patrick Bell

By Fran Stallings, Historian

Two years ago, Dr. Patrick Bell retired after 40 years as a surgeon. He is now busier than ever!

Patrick says his interest in wild things started on the front porch of his family's home on a cow/calf operation outside Tishomingo. He remembers summer nights ("before yellow porch lights") being fascinated by spiders catching moths. He loved watching the tadpoles in puddles of seasonal rain and biking all day, free to explore. Fourteen years old, on a John Deere tractor, he exchanged looks with a coyote loping across the field: the wonder never left.

The appeal of interacting with Nature stayed with Patrick through college (biology major with chemistry/environmental science double minors) and medical school. He got his MD in 1982 and did a family medicine residency in Spokane, Washington. Then back to Tishomingo, where he had a private practice for 14 years. He returned to OU for a general surgery residency, after which he moved to Edmond and practiced general surgery for 19 years. He finished his career in critical care surgery at Baptist Hospital in Oklahoma City dealing with trauma and surgical emergencies.



When living in Tishomingo he landscaped the house and acreage with native trees and plants because "it just made sense" although nobody was doing that then. "How could humans improve on something that nature had spent thousands of years developing?"

Patrick has been connected to ONPS for so long, he can't remember how he got involved.... He was attracted to our message, philosophy, and goals around 15 yrs ago. He remembers that on a cold November evening in 2015 he met with several members at the Whole Foods Market in OKC to discuss the moribund Central Chapter. That got him elected chapter chair for 6 years; he then served as ONPS President from 2021-23.

He says Doug Tallamy "wrote the bible, for the common person, about the interconnection between botany and biology. We now realize it really is all interwoven – and ONPS has a wonderful opportunity to get that message out there. Monarchs are just the poster child for pollinators and all things, including humans, that rely on a healthy, robust environment."

In 2016 the Central Chapter of ONPS hosted Monarch experts Chip Taylor & Christian Baum at our Indoor Outing. "That was normally a sleepy event, but the topic and speakers brought in an overflow crowd." Patrick was so impressed with turnout and enthusiasm that he wanted a statewide initiative. He helped found the first OK Monarch Summit, from which developed the Oklahoma Monarch & Pollinator Collaborative which is the organization that guides Okies for Monarchs. He has been on advisory boards of multiple related organizations.

After his father died, Patrick gave the Tishomingo farmland a few years to recover, then began to take the Bermuda/fescue "improved" cow/calf pasture back to a tall grass prairie. He started in 2022 with 35 acres. (Glyphosate spray; burn 3x in one growing season. Then plant native grasses and forbs in fall; next year mow repeatedly to 6" so seedlings get light; 2nd year mow to 12"). This year he is working on another 25 acres. He wants to emphasize flowering plants and pollinators but it's hard to find sources for the southern Oklahoma

(Meet the Members continued on page 14)

(Meet the Members continued from page 13)

eco-region. A no-till drill is ideal for planting. Two years ago, he found none available south of I-40 so he improvised with 20+ yr old planter that had the agitator to push fluffy seeds down but didn't have the drill attachment. He had to till them in, which awakened the seed bank's clover and vetch. The seedlings had to fend for themselves as if self-seeded. He hopes to have a proper no-till drill by this fall for the next 25 acres.

Meanwhile, things are looking good on the first 35. He plans eventually to turn it into a conservation easement to be used by citizens and youth of Johnston County and the state, to show benefits of a tall grass prairie. Meanwhile, it's a one-man job.

Two daughters and three grandkids are all in Edmond. "I knew I had done something right when my oldest daughter came home from OSU and said 'It doesn't seem right that I don't have a compost pail' ". (The Bell family had been composting for 30 years.) The other daughter's 3rd story college apartment had a patio, so she created an outdoor milkweed plot: she got eggs and caterpillars!! "If you plant it, they will come," says Patrick. Both daughters now landscape with native plants, milkweed.

Clearly Dr. Patrick Bell has been healing more than human ailments!

Bristow Brimming with Wildflowers

Article and photos by Lynn Michael

Lake Massena west of Bristow, Oklahoma was planted in wildflowers a few years back and they continue to put on quite a show every spring. Well worth a stop if you are in the area.



For joining or renewing use this form

Fill out this form or supply the same information. Make checks payable to Oklahoma Native Plant Society and mail to:
Oklahoma Native Plant Society, PO Box 14274, Tulsa, OK 74159.

Membership is for Jan. 1 – Dec. 31 of current year and dues include subscription to *Gaillardia*.

(Please Print Clearly) _____ RENEWAL _____ NEW MEMBER (All dues are tax deductible)

Name: _____

Affiliation: (School, Business, or Avocation) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ - _____

Phone: Home: (_____) _____ Cell: (_____) _____

Work: (_____) _____ (Please don't list my phone in the directory: _____)

E-mail: _____

E-mail 2: _____

Membership Levels:

- ____ Individual (\$20)
 ____ Family (\$25)
 ____ Life Individual (\$300)
 ____ Family Individual (\$350)
 ____ Student (\$10) (free with faculty sponsor)

Chapter affiliation:

- ____ Central (OKC area)
 ____ Northeast (Tulsa area)

You may sign up for multiple chapters if you like, to receive field trip and meeting notices from that chapter.

Need more details email: ONPSinfo@gmail.com

ONPS *Gaillardia* newsletter delivery options:

____ USPS mail ____ email ____ Both mail and email

***Order form for Volume 22 of
Oklahoma Native Plant Record***

Send order form with your check to:

Oklahoma Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 14274
 Tulsa, OK 74159-1274
 (Need an invoice? gcaddell@uco.edu)

Name _____
 or institution _____
 Mailing address _____
 State and Zip code _____
 E-mail address _____

Print Volume 22 @ \$15.00 _____

USB drive Volume 1-22 @ \$10.00 _____

Shipping charge + \$4.50 _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

Oklahoma Native Plant Record

ISSN 1536-7738

***Oklahoma
Native Plant Record***



Journal of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society
 Volume 22, May 2024

All archived issues of the Oklahoma Native Plant Record are
 available online at:

<https://ojs.library.okstate.edu/osu/index.php/ONPR/issue/archive>

Oklahoma Native Plant Society
P. O. Box 14274
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74159

Non-Profit
U. S. Postage Paid
Tulsa, Oklahoma
Permit No. 357

Return Service Requested

Summer 2024 Issue
2024 Dues are past due.

**COPY AND ART
DEADLINE
FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE IS Aug 5, 2024**



At left: Champion Shortleaf Pine of Oklahoma seen on WOW field trip.

Above: Members learned about the area and history from CR Ledford at the Friday dinner at Wonders of Wildflowers (WOW). Photos by Sandy Graue