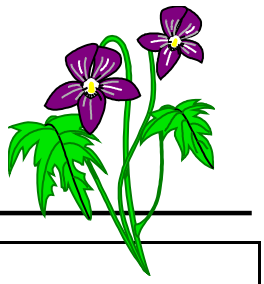
Folsom Native Plant Society

folsomnps.org May, 2008



Next Meeting Date: Sunday, May 18, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.

Bring plants and / or cuttings for show and tell or identification, especially BBBB plants. Also bring a potluck dish.

At the Home of John Larkin *- 86419 Mockingbird Hill Road (north of Folsom) - phone number: 796-5597*
Directions: From Folsom, head north on Hwy. 25 for 4 ½ miles (start your odometer at the 2nd Folsom stoplight.) You will pass Jenkins Lumber. Turn left on Mocking Bird Hill Road (if you cross the little bridge on Hwy 25, you've missed the turn.) Drive on Mocking Bird Hill Road for 4/10 of a mile, past the Blackwell Cemetery. John's house is on the left

From the President's Corner

Salutations to All,

Well our crazy Louisiana weather is at it again. It's either dry as a bone or flooding, yet the native plants keep on growing and blooming and flourishing in our gardens. Show stoppers this month include *Coreopsis spp.*, Skullcap (*Scutellaria spp.*), Giant Coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), Mexican Primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*), Indian Pink (*Spigellia marilandica*), *Salvia coccinea*, Obedient Plant (*Physostegia virginiana*), Pickerel-weed (*Pontederia cordata*), Water Lilies and Spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana).* Who needs exotics with all these beautiful flowers around? We've been photographing some of the beautiful natives and in almost every photograph is a happy insect, enjoying the pollen or nectar.

If you missed the last meeting, you missed hearing a great talk. Linda Beall really out did herself with her presentation on Native Plants that Attract and Sustain Butterflies. The Lee Road branch of the Library was a great place to meet. Librarian, A.J. Bailey, came through for us with MacGuyver-like finesse and in minutes, produced a working screen from products she picked up at the Dollar Store. Both she and Linda deserve a big, "Hooray!" for a job well done.

The May meeting is the last one before summer break. Gosh, I feel like a teacher / librarian again! Anyway, so that the board can plan for our September meeting and the 2008-2009 programs, we need to decide on a theme. Some possibilities are: Restoring Native Habitat by identifying and removing Exotic Species in your yard, Plant Natives and Save the Insects, Say No to Lawns and Yes to Natives and Sustainable Gardening. Please think about these and any other subjects that you'd like the club to study next year.

Next year's meetings will be rotated between 3 Library Branches, the Lee Road Branch, the Folsom Branch and the Covington Branch. If anyone would like to have a meeting at their house, please contact either Al & Yvonne or Candyce & David. Also, if you know of any good speakers, also email us the contact information. We'd like to have a Fall (September or October) and a Spring (April or May) presentation.

And now, I wouldn't be a good teacher / librarian without giving a summer assignment, so here it is - Go forth and collect those native seed heads. Many of the early spring wildflower seeds have matured and are ready to be collected and the others will continue to mature

throughout the summer. Remember to let them dry inside, in a paper bag. Then separate all the chaff and put the seeds in a paper envelope labeled with the name, date and where the seeds were collected. We're trying to maintain our own native seed bank and also to disperse our beautiful wildflower seeds throughout the land as we spread the word about the benefits and beauty of native plants in the landscape. (Do I hear "This Land Is Your Land" playing in the background?) ☺ Part two of the summer homework is to further your knowledge about native plants and their uses by reading books and magazines, attending talks and / or researching on the Internet. One of our members just alerted me to the wealth of information that you can get by setting Google Alerts. The alerts will let you know when various blogs publish new information about native plants. There are also many new books at the library about Sustainable Gardening, Permaculture, Landscaping with Native Plants and Insects and Native Plants. All you have to do is do a search for any of these topics or ask the librarian for help.

Happy Mother's Day! Have a good summer. May all of your weeds become wildflowers.

Yvonne Bordelon

"We all moan and groan about the loss of the quality of life through the destruction of our ecology, and yet each one of us, in our own little comfortable ways, contributes daily to that destruction. It's time now to awaken in each one of us the respect and attention our beloved mother deserves."
- Ed Asner

May Native Blooms

Asclepias longifolia, **Longleaf Milkweed**
Arisaema triphyllum, **Jack-in-the-pulpit**
Baptisia leucophaea, **Nodding Indigo**
Bidens aristosa, **Sticktight**
Bidens pilosa, **Shepherd's Needle**
Coreopsis lanceolata, **Coreopsis**
Clematis crispa, **Leather-flower, Clematis**
Erigeron philadelphicus, **Daisy Fleabane**
Eryngium prostratum, **Creeping eryngo**
Erythrina herbacea, **Coral Bean, Mamou**
Helenium flexuosum, **Sneezeweed**
Hydrangea quercifolia, **Oak-leaved Hydrangea**
Illicium floridanum, **Florida Anise**
Iris brevicaulis, **Zig-zag-stemmed**
Itea virginica, **Virginia Sweetspire**
Lonicera sempervirens, **Coral Honeysuckle**
Monarda fistulosa, **Wild Bergamot**
Nymphaea odorata, **Water Lily, white**
Passiflora incarnata **Maypop, Passion Flower**
Penstemon spp.
Physostegia virginiana, **Obedient Plant**
Pontederia cordata, **Pickerel-weed**
Prunella vulgaris, **Self-heal**
Oenothera speciosa, **Showy evening, Mexican Primrose**
Oxallis rubra, *O. violacea* **Violet Wood Sorrel**
Phlox divaricata, **Blue Phlox**
Ranunculus fascicularis, **Early Buttercup**
Rudbeckia fulgida, **Bracted Cone-flower**; R. amplexicaulis, R. hirta, **Black-eyed Susan** and *R. maxima*, **Giant Cone-flower**
Ruellia caroliniensis and R. nudiflora, **Wild Petunias**
Salvia lyrata , ***Lyre-leaved Sage***
Sarracenia alata, **Yellow Pitcher-plant**
Scutellaria integrifolia, **Rough Skullcap**
Sisyrinchium atlanticum, *S. capillare*, **Blue eyed grass**
Spigelia marilandica, **Indian Pink**
Spiranthes spp., **Ladies' tresses orchid**
Stachys floridana, **Tuberous Hedge-nettle (invasive)**
Stokesia laevis, **Stokes' Aster**
Taraxacum officinale, **Dandelion**
Tradescantia virginiana, **Spiderwort**
Triodanis perfoliata, **Venus' Looking-glass**
Verbena rigida, **Stiff verbena**
Viburnum dentatum, **Arrowwood**

The Latin Quarter

More word games to exercise the brain and keep the mind sharp. Most of these botanical names describe how the plant looks, so they give you good hints as to the common name. The prefixes, suffixes and/or words querc-, nudi-, -folia, -maxima and -flora are used in other botanical plant names so it's a good idea to remember them. See if you can guess the common names by reading the meaning of the botanical names below. The answers (the common names) can be found on page 4.

1. ***Asclepias longifolia*** *– Asclepias = milkweed; butterfly weed, longifolia = long leaved.*
2. ***Hydrangea quercifolia*** - *Hydrangea – hydor = water, angos = jar. The fruit of these shrubs is cup-shaped. Quercifolia = with leaves ike Quercus or Oak*
3. ***Rudbeckia maxima*** - Rudbeckia = cone-flower, black-eyed susan, maxima = largest.
4. ***Ruellia nudiflora*** *– Ruellia = herbs and shrubs named for Jean Ruel (1474-1537), herbalist to Francois I of France, nudiflora – nudi = naked, bare, flora = flowered. The violet, petunia like flowers have bare stems.*

Sustainable Gardening **by Yvonne Bordelon**

One of the hot topics and new buzz words in gardening is Sustainable Gardening. Basically, sustainable gardening is to garden with sensitivity toward the environment and in harmony with nature. A sustainable garden will thrive naturally for years without excessive watering, cutting, pruning, fertilizing or using petrochemicals for pests. Sustainable gardening practices include composting, mulching, adopting smart watering practices and using natural means of pest control.

Most sustainable gardens are organic gardens, that is, gardens that grow food without the use of petrochemical pesticides, herbicides and inorganic fertilizers. An organic garden relies on the use of beneficial insects, diversity of plants, and the use of compost to supply the soil with nutrients.

Another beneficial practice of sustainable garden is the use of native plants and trees. Planting native plants and trees is one of the best ways to work with, rather than against, nature. By using plant species that grow locally in your area, you will have plants and trees that take less care and energy and will be healthier than exotic species that you buy at the big chains. Another benefit is that native birds, insects and other wildlife have evolved with these native plant species and are able to use the fruits, nectars and habitat these plants and trees provide.

Starting a compost pile will also benefit a sustainable garden. Good compost improves the health of both the plants and the soil. Worm composting is another easy way to have a supply of pure organic plant food available at all times. All you need to start is a shallow bin that allows air to circulate, bedding and worms. The castings that worms produce are a great fertilizer for plants and worm composting is an excellent way to keep food waste out of the garbage.

Drip Irrigation, Rain Gardens and the collection of rain water are excellent ways to use existing resources to benefit the garden and the environment. Drip irrigation is a controlled, slow application of water that flows under low pressure through plastic pipe or hose laid along each row of plants. The water drips out of tiny holes that are made in the hose wall so soil moisture remains constant, and air is always available. Since the water is delivered directly to plants, little is lost to evaporation or runoff making this technique very water efficient.

Another common practice is the use of mulch. Mulch protects the soil by helping it retain moisture, suppresses weeds and insulates plants from extreme temperatures. Leaves and pine straw are best, but any material such as wood chips (not Cypress), straw, nut shells, paper, sawdust, leaves, seaweed, grass clippings or compost can be used. Mulching is a way to recycle materials that might otherwise be discarded and simultaneously improve your soil.

Answers to Latin Quarter

1. *Asclepias longifolia* – Longleaf Milkweed
2. *Hydrangea quercifolia* – Oak-leaved Hydrangea
3. *Rudbeckia maxima* – Giant Cone-flower
4. *Ruellia nudiflora* – Violet Wild Petunia

Pest control is done by using the Producer, Prey and Predator cycle of life. We must all learn to tolerate a certain amount of pests. In an organic garden there are a few pests, but there is also an army of beneficial insects, spiders, reptiles and birds waiting to eat those pests. Through the years, as we tried to grow a maximum amount of food, we have come to view all insects as enemies and to depend on chemical fertilizers to encourage growth and poisons to kill pests. Most are indiscriminate and kill beneficial organisms too, upsetting the natural balance, and, when it rains, the chemical runoff poisons our ground water, rivers and even the Gulf. Using organic pest control techniques is a better way to control pests and keep a healthy, natural balance in your garden. These techniques can be as simple as planting companion plants to attract beneficial insects, introducing beneficial insects to your garden or making your own pesticides from ingredients you may already have on hand such as borax, ammonia and beer. Organic gardening controls are preferable to chemical pesticides. However, when it is absolutely necessary to use a pesticide, choose the least toxic product.

Items that are usually thrown away can be recycled in the garden. Paint stirring sticks and old forks can be used to display vegetable seed packets. A broken pot can be a toad house. Clear plastic liter bottles can be used as mini-greenhouses for starting cuttings. Rigid, black plastic pots can be re-used or returned to nurseries for the growers.

There are many friendly animals that should have an open invitation into your garden. These include:

- **Bats** are a valuable pollinator and they also consume large quantities of insects. A single little brown bat can catch 600 mosquitoes in one hour.
- **Bees** pollinate 80% of nut, fruit, vegetable, forage and seed crops.
- **Green Lacewings** will eat mites, mealy bugs and other small insects but their favorite meal is aphids.
- **Ground Beetles'** favorite insect meals are cutworms, grubs and root maggots. Some even love slugs and snails. To invite them into your garden, place a log or board at one end of your garden.
- **Hover Flies** look like little flying helicopters. They are some of the garden's greatest allies. They feed on flower nectar, which makes them excellent pollinators. Their favorite meals are aphids and mealy bugs.
- **Hummingbirds** consume more than half their total weight in food everyday and a big part of their diet is insects.
- **Ladybugs** love to eat aphids, so this beetle is worth its weight in gold.
- **Lizards** eat a variety of harmful insects.
- **Spiders** — an average spider eats about 100 insects a year. Most are not poisonous and are beneficial to the environment.

- **Toads** — one toad can eat between 10,000 and 20,000 slugs, flies, grubs, cutworms or grasshoppers per year.

The information in this article was complied from a number of on-line sources, but the best source was: **http://www.recycleworks.org/compost/sustainable_gardening.html**

Guess the Mystery Plant and your name will go into the Door Prize Drawing.

The April mystery plant was the Red Buckeye (*Aesculus pavia*) and the door prize drawing winner was, again, Barbara Hargroeves. Boy, maybe she'll pick some lottery numbers for us.

This perennial is a butterfly favorite. It grows to over 6 feet tall and has leaves that are 6 inches long (shaped blade elliptic-lanceolate). Ray flowers are yellow and disk flowers are dark brown to black and are arranged in a cone shape. It is widespread in prairie and pineland and blooms from May to September. If you know the answer, write the name of the plant and your name on a slip of paper at the May meeting to be eligible for the door prize drawing.

Membership Renewal Information

New members who joined from September to December 2007, are paid up for 2008. For everyone else, the 2008 renewals were due in January.

Folsom Native Plant Society
Membership Renewal / Application

It's time to pay your FNPS dues. Please complete the following and return with your check for either $18.00 per family (if you wish to receive the newsletter by regular mail) or $12.00 per family (if you wish to receive it by e-mail). Special student rates are available: $9.00 for the printed newsletter & $6.00 for the email version.

Regular Membership
_____ $18.00 Mail

_____ $12.00 e-mail

Student School Name: _____
_____ $9.00 Mail

_____ $6.00 e-mail

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Mail to: **Folsom Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 1055, Folsom, LA 70437**

Folsom Native Plant Society Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of our group is to protect, perpetuate, and propagate the abundant native plants of Northwest St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana, and adjacent areas, focusing primarily on our native wildflowers, which are fast disappearing; and to discourage pollution of our water and ground so basic to their survival.

Our Board for 2008

President Emeritus: John Larkin
President: Yvonne Bordelon
Program Chairman: Rod Downie
Treasurer: David Scherer
Plant Recording Committee Chairman: A.J. Bailey
Business Recorder: Al Bordelon
Newsletter: Al & Yvonne Bordelon
ylbordelon@bellsouth.net **Publishers:** Candyce & David Scherer
Hospitality Coordinator: Candyce Scherer
New Member Mentor: Temae Theriot
FNSP Website: (http://folsomnps.org**)** Emily Canter & Yvonne Bordelon

Dates to Remember

May 18, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. – FNPS meeting at John's house.

September Meeting date & time TBA

Folsom Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 1055
Folsom, LA 70437

Please note:
Next Meeting:
Sunday, May 18, 2008
1:00 P.M
At the home of John Larkin