

Folsom Native Plant Society

folsomnps.org

December 2012



Next Meeting Date: Sunday, December 16, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.

Karla Partridge's Home, 80070 Mae Fussell Road, Covington, LA 70435.

From the south, you take Hwy. 190 north into Covington. At second red light past overpass turn right on Hwy 437 (Lee Road). Go 8 miles to an all-way stop at Hwy 40 and Lee Road.

Turn Left. Head northwest on LA-40 W/LA-437 for 2.4 miles, then turn left onto Allison Rd 384 ft. Take the 1st left onto Mae Fussell Rd. The destination will be on the left

From the President's Corner

Greetings All,

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on what we accomplished in 2012. I think that through the use of technology and media, the FNPS did a great job of spreading the word about the benefits of native plants this year. I predict that next year will be even better.

FNPS officers for 2013 were approved. We welcome Kraig Stutes to the board in the position of vice-president and Deborah Nolan is going to help with Hospitality. All other officers remain the same.

Some of you may have heard that I am now a freelance writer for Louisiana Gardener (State-by-State-Gardening) magazine. This is a wonderful opportunity to tout the greatness of native plants. I plan to contribute articles about natives, sustainability and gardening for wildlife regularly during 2013.

Speaking of wildlife gardening, the habitat that we created here on the Tchefuncte has attracted a winter hummingbird. It's very shy and only visits the feeder during cold weather, but I was able to get a few photos of it (which I posted on Facebook). It is an immature male Black-chinned (*Archilochus*). When you are planting hummingbird plants, consider planting some that bloom in winter. One such native is Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*).

Help is needed to design and plan a Butterfly and Hummingbird garden at Archbishop Hannan High School. Contact project director, Jenny Geesey, if you can help.

As usual the tour of Jim Russell's habitat was a treat. Everyone who attended left with much more knowledge and some seeds and/or plants. The December meeting will be held at the home of Karla Partridge in Folsom. This will be our end-of-year celebration, so bring some holiday goodies to share. *Yvonne L. Bordelon*

Sustainable Gardening and Synergy

Sustainable Gardening is all about relationships or synergy, that is, how parts of the food chain work with each other. If they work well together and they benefit one another, they have synergy.

Native plants have been growing here since before Columbus and the first colonists set foot on this land. Native flora and fauna established a synergistic relationship long ago. Bees, butterflies and hummingbirds visit large stands of certain flowers which they know contain adequate pollen and/or nectar and in turn, they pollinate the flowers so the plants can reproduce. Both parties get something from this relationship.

Some plants provide food for wildlife by having edible leaves or by producing edible fruit, seeds or nuts. If all the leaves on a plant are intact and perfect, then it has probably been introduced into the environment. Think about it. What eats the leaves of Chinese Tallow, Privet or Bush Killer? The answer is nothing. If there are no holes in the leaves, then our local animals can't eat it. But local animals often can eat the seeds and fruit of such plants and consequently spread it all over the countryside. Since there are no natural predators that eat the plant to keep it in check, it becomes invasive and overruns natural habits.

"But why do bugs eat the leaves of my cultivated plum and oriental azaleas?" you say. That's because there are native members of the Prunus and Rhododendron genera already growing here, so insects have evolved that use these as food plants.

Caterpillars are the larval stage of butterflies and moths. Both are pollinators of many plants. A few, such as tomato hornworms and beet worms, are pests in the vegetable garden, but most are useful natural pollinators that should be welcome in the garden. I have found that encouraging the growth of certain native plants, such as the lovely butterfly pea vine (*Centrosema virginianum*), results in having fewer problems with the attractive long-tailed skipper butterfly larvae eating the cultivated peas and beans. The few larvae that I find can be easily picked off by hand. With a bountiful supply of native food, the skippers do not have to resort to using the cultivated varieties.

Working with Mother Nature, not against her, and using the natural food chain is the sustainable way to grow food.

Quote from Thoreau on Man and Nature

Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air; drink the drink, taste the fruit; and resign yourself to the influence of each. Let them be your only diet, drink and botanical medicines. Be blown on by all the winds. Open all your pores and bathe in all the tides of nature, in all her streams and oceans, at all seasons.

Book Corner

Ray Neyland has written a wildflower guide that you may want to add to your collection. It is available at the St. Tammany Parish Public Library if you'd like to look before buying it.

Neyland, Ray. **Wildflowers of the Coastal Plain: A Field Guide**

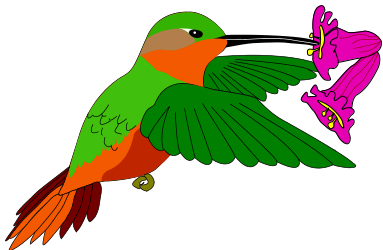
Includes the Lower Mississippi River Valley, Gulf, and Atlantic Coastal States, 2009.

Wildflowers of the Coastal Plain provides detailed information on 535 species of herbaceous plants, vines, and shrubs inhabiting one of the great floristic provinces of the United States. The coastal plain extends from southeast Texas eastward to Florida and includes the Mississippi River flood plain, which stretches from southern Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico. It embraces all but the southern tip of the Florida peninsula and proceeds up the eastern seaboard into southern New Jersey and includes parts of Long Island and Cape Cod. (Description by the publisher.)

December Quiz

Here is a little quiz to test your knowledge of useful native plants.

1. Which of the following native plants bloom during winter (December - late February)?
 - a. Taiwan cherry tree
 - b. Witch hazel
 - c. Swamp red maple
 - d. a and b
 - e. b and c
2. Winter food is important to wildlife, especially birds. Which of the plants below bear fruit that is available in winter.
 - a. Wild Blueberry (*Vaccinium* spp.)
 - b. American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)
 - c. Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above
3. Good native plants for the winter hummingbird garden include:
 - a. Carolina Jessamine
 - b. Red maple
 - c. Witch Hazel
 - d. All of the above
 - e. None of the above
4. Shelter or cover is important to birds during winter. Which of the following statements are true?
 - a. Deciduous trees provide good winter shelter.
 - b. Dense evergreen trees and shrubs placed on the north side will block winter wind.
 - c. Holly and wax myrtle provide both food and shelter for birds.
 - d. a and b
 - e. b and c



Folsom Native Plant Society Facebook Page –
<http://www.facebook.com/FolsomNativePlantSociety>

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of our group is to protect, perpetuate, and propagate the abundant native plants of 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 2012

President: Yvonne Bordelon

Vice President: Kraig Stutes

Treasurer: David Scherer

Recorder: A.J. Bailey

Newsletter: Nick Blady nblady77@gmail.com

Publishers: Candyce & David Scherer

Hospitality Coordinator: Deborah Nolan & Candyce Scherer

FNSP Website:(<http://folsomnps.org>) Yvonne Bordelon

FNPS Meeting Dates

Sunday, December 16, 2012 at 1:00 p.m.
Celebration, food and fun. Place: Home of
Karla Partridge, see p. 1 for directions.

Sunday, January 20, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. Place:
Home of A.J. Bailey

Sunday, February 17, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. -
Seed packaging and Habitat tour. Place:
Yvonne Bordelon's house.

Check the FNPS Facebook page for other
native plant dates and news.

Answers: 1. e, 2. b, 3. d, 4. e



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