



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

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Spring 2015**

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ONPS website: www.oknativeplants.org

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FOR NEXT ISSUE IS**

10 May 2015

Gaillardia

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society Newsletter

Upcoming Events/Activities

(check the ONPS website for more details)

Friday, March 13. Oklahoma Invasive Species Conference, @ National Weather Center in Norman.
Co-hosted by the Oklahoma Invasive Plant Council and Oklahoma Pest Action Council.

Mark your calendars!

2015
Wildflower Workshop
May 15-16
@
Southeastern State
University
Durant, OK

More info at
oknativeplants.org



Sept. 25-27. 2015 ONPS Annual Meeting, @ University of Oklahoma Biological Station, Lake Texoma. Join meeting with Friends of the University of Oklahoma Biological Station.

Note: all members are invited to all meetings, including board meetings, and are encouraged to bring guests.

WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS

April Enos, Guthrie
Robert A. Eskridge, Edmond
Mitra Harnsberger, Oklahoma City
Gayle Weber, Broken Arrow
Jerry Welch, Guthrie
Lana Ryburn, Anadarko
Stephanie Paine, Tahlequah
Vic and Lisa Roberts, Lawton
Scott Thompson, Sand Springs

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Joe Roberts

Greetings, plant people! As of this writing, we have enjoyed several days of unseasonably warm temperatures. I like winter more than most folks I know, but even I have to admit that the warm weather has me pining for spring here in early February. However, anyone who has lived in Oklahoma long knows that we can get some garden-wrecking weather well into March, so I am not putting away my winter clothes for a while.

But the warmth is nice, and the weather for the Indoor Outing was beautiful, allowing us to get outside and walk around our host campus at Cameron University. We had a great crowd with over 60 people attending from all over the state.

The meeting began with remarks from Dr. Terry Conley, Dean of the School of Science and Technology. I think everyone was encouraged to hear Dr. Conley address the declining number of botany programs in our universities, and his support for the continuing existence and strengthening of these programs instead.

The rest of the morning was spent with talks on the use and importance of voucher specimens, and a discussion of taxonomic keys with informal question and answer sessions. Great timing it was, because we also had the newly minted *Flora of Oklahoma Keys and Descriptions* available, which sold out immediately.

After lunch, we broke into workshops. Sheila Strawn and Bob Harris led the lichen workshop, and Mark Fishbein guided the milkweed workshop. The third group enjoyed a tree tour of the campus with Mike Dunn of Cameron. (Check out the "2015 Indoor-Outing" article by Barbara Klein found in this edition of *Gaillardia*.)

After the close of the meeting, we were guided around the soon-to-be-opened Medicine Park Aquarium and Natural Sciences Center by Executive Director Doug Kemper. Almost there, Doug, almost there!

It was very nice to see both new and familiar friends at the Indoor Outing. The turnout was very good. Especially encouraging was the number of folks attending from the southwest area of OK. This bodes very well for our newest chapter, the Southwest Chapter, and their new chair Helen Riley. I can't wait until the Wichita Wildlife Refuge tour in May or June.

Thanks to Cameron University, Dean Terry Conley, Dr. Mike Dunn, and all the wonderful student volunteers who helped put on a very successful Indoor Outing. Thanks to Dr. Mark Fishbein and Dr. Sheila Strawn for leading those educational workshops, and to Bob Harris, lichen enthusiast, who drove all the way from Austin, TX just to help lead the lichen workshop! Thanks to the Southwest Chapter members, Helen Riley (chair), and Doug Kemper for hosting. And thanks to everyone for just being there and making this year's outing a success.

2015 INDOOR-OUTING

Oklahoma Native Plant Society's 2015 Indoor-Outing was held at Cameron University (CU) on Saturday, February 7. The university and the newly formed Southwest Oklahoma Chapter served as hosts. The theme was "Using a Taxonomic Key for the Identification of Plants."

After introductions and welcomes by Dr. Mike Dunn, CU, Dr. Terry Conley, Dean of the School of Science and Technology, and Joe Roberts, ONPS President, Mike and Dr. Mark Fishbein, OSU, gave an overview of the state's herbaria; this triggered a discussion of plant location designations. While older samples might say "5 miles west of Lawton," GPS can pinpoint the exact site. This is a boon to researchers, but there are concerns about protecting private property and plants. This triggered what was a fun day of informal give and take between the presenters and the participants.

Attendees then broke into small groups and using the new *Flora of Oklahoma Keys and Descriptions* (available for \$30/copy from Adam Ryburn at floraoklahoma@yahoo.com) learned to patiently and methodically go through a key and to look up unfamiliar terminology. Working together we finally identified the sample as Shepherd's Purse.

Three workshops were offered after lunch: "Keying Milkweeds," "Keying Lichens," and a campus tree tour. For the first, Mark Fishbein offered good pictures of Oklahoma milkweeds and a lesson on their unusual flower structures. We learned from Dr. Sheila Strawn (UCO), assisted by Bob Harris, that lichens may be identified visually and also by using chemicals such as bleach or potassium, which might cause color changes visible under a microscope. Finally, Mike Dunn led tours of the arboretum he has created on the campus. He told tales of acquisitions and disappointments; it is amazing how much success he has had during Lawton's drought years!

2015 INDOOR-OUTING (CONTINUED)

At the end of the program a small group visited the Medicine Pak Aquarium and Natural Sciences Center. Doug Kemper described what the center will look like when it opens this summer.

Resource information shared included:

ONPS webpage: www.oknativeplants.org

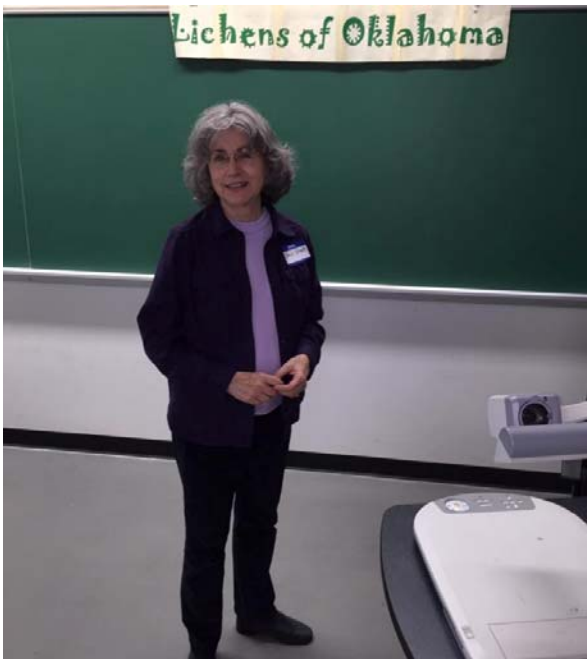
OK Vascular Plant Data Base: www.oklahomaplantdatabase.org

OK Academy of Science (spring meeting April 10-12) <http://biosurvey.ou.edu/oas/>

OK Invasive Plant Council (annual meeting March 13) <https://okipc.wordpress.com/>



Participants engaged in a keying exercise led by Dr. Mike Dunn of Cameron University. The unknown plant was *Capsella bursa-pastoris* (Shepherd's Purse)



Dr. Sheila Strawn led a workshop on Lichens of Oklahoma.



Dr. Mark Fishbein led a workshop on *Asclepias* (milkweeds) in Oklahoma.

BOTANIST'S CORNER

An Introduction To Landscaping With Oklahoma's Native Plants

Adam Sarmiento

As members of the Oklahoma Native Plant Society we are interested in and concerned about Oklahoma's native plants and plant communities. Human development, agriculture and other activities are putting a serious strain on much of our state's natural botanical heritage. It's with this in mind that we as native plant lovers need to examine ways in which we can preserve some of this natural heritage and bring some of it's vitality and biodiversity into our landscapes both private and public. Bringing native plants into our landscapes is one of the best way we can assure that these plants and the wildlife that depend on them will survive and thrive. Replacing water thirsty exotic plants with natives will also help reduce the strain put on our water supplies.

There are so many beautiful, easy to grow and often useful plants that can be easily incorporated into landscapes. The more this is done, the more public perception and demand for these plants will increase. The easiest way to work natives into your landscape is to add some of them to your existing flower beds. Some virtually fool proof perennials and grasses to start with are: *Bouteloua gracilis* (blue grama), *Coreopsis* (tickseed), *Echinacea* (coneflower), *Gaillardia* (Indian blanket), *Helianthus maximilliani* (maximillian sunflower), *Melampodium leucanthum* (blackfoot daisy), *Rudbeckia* (black eyed Susan), *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little bluestem), *Solidago* (goldenrod), and *Yucca glauca* (soapweed). Another good place to start is to consider replacing some of your existing exotic shrubs and trees with native alternatives. For example, replace invasive *Ligustrum* 'chinese privet' with *Ilex vomitoria* 'yaupon holly' or replace a Bradford Pear with *Amelanchier* (serviceberry).

For those of you who have already incorporated some natives into your landscape, or even converted much of your landscape into natives consider ways to go deeper. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of Oklahoma native plants that could work well as landscape plants and for the most part many of these are under-represented in our landscapes. Consider some under-utilized native annuals such as *Aphanostephus skirrhobasis* (lazy daisy), *Gaillardia aestivalis* (prairie gaillardia), or *Grindellia* (Spanish gold). Or perhaps you might replace your non-native turf with a meadow lawn that incorporates native turf grasses like *Bouteloua dactyloides* (buffalo grass)

with some low growing annuals and perennials like *Callirhoe involucrate* (winecups), *Castilleja* (Indian paintbrush) and *Heterotheca* (false goldenaster). Lawn areas under trees are often only marginally successful using Fescue. Why not try a no-mow lawn using a native sedge like the graceful *Carex albicans* (oak sedge).

Edible, medicinal, and utilitarian natives are also an area that is under-explored for landscape use. Ancient food crops like the native annual grass *Phalaris caroliniana* (maygrass) were once used as a grain by Native Americans. Roots of *Helianthus tuberosus* (Jerusalem artichoke) are good eating and the plants are very attractive. *Echinacea* and *Solidago* teas and tinctures have long been known to have healing properties.

There are many ways to make your landscaping more native, and be it a few plants or a complete new landscape your efforts will be rewarded. So in addition to going out into what remains of our native habitats and observing and appreciating native plants consider ways to bring some of those plants into your own environment.

Here's a list of some Oklahoma nurseries that carry native plants:

- Bustani Plant Farm, 1313 East 44th Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074, bustaniplantfarm.com (405) 372-3379.
- Prairie Wind Nursery, 929 Goodman Lane, Norman, OK 73026, prairiewindnursery.com (405)-579-8846.
- Wild things Nursery, wildthingsnursery.com, (405) 255-1707.

Seed sources:

- Easy Wildflowers, PO Box 522 Willow Springs MO 65793, easywildflowers.com, (417) 469-2611.
- Lorenz OK seeds, 511 West Oklahoma, Okeene, OK 73763 lorenzsokseedsllc.com, (580) 822-3655.
- MO Wildflowers, 9814 Pleasant Hill Road, Jefferson City, MO 65109, mowildflowers.net, (573) 496-3492.
- Native American Seed, Junction, Texas, seedsources.com, 1-800-728-4043.
- Prairie Moon Nursery, 32115 Prairie Lane, Winona, MN 55987, prairiemoon.com, (866) 417-8156.

*Adam Sarmiento has been gardening professionally for seventeen years and runs the environmentally focused landscaping design/build firm **Eco Landscaping**. Email: adam@ecogardenok.com, (405) 802-5922, ecogardenok.com.*

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Southwest Chapter

Helen Riley

I am the newly appointed chair of the Southwest Chapter and am delighted to take on this job. Those who have spoken to me know that I grew up in England where I inherited my interest in flowers from my mother. Transplanted to the Lawton area 40 years ago I started to learn the local flora, especially the ones in the beautiful Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. I am a volunteer with the Friends of the Wichitas and have been leading tours (including the wildflower tours) for the general public for about the last 12 years.

The next meeting of the Southwest Chapter is on May 7 at 7:00 p.m. and will be held at the Medicine Park Aquarium. A wildflower tour of the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, May 30. More information can be found at the ONPS website.

Central Chapter

Adam Ryburn

The Central Chapter will soon be undertaking monthly field trips to the John Nichols Scout Ranch located at County Line and SW 119th in the southwest part of Oklahoma City. The goal is to create a checklist of all plants (and maybe some lichen and fungi) by the end of the growing season.

This work is being done in conjunction with the Biology Department at Oklahoma City University.

For more information on field trips, workshops, and meetings, check out the ONPS website or contact Central Chapter Chair, Adam Ryburn via email: oknativeplants@yahoo.com.

Northeast Chapter

Connie Murray

For our December 1st meeting our planned speaker was ill and forced to cancel. Instead we were treated to a spontaneous slideshow of wildflowers by Sue and Dale Amstutz. We greatly appreciate their stepping up at the last minute!

Our spring meeting speakers are still in the planning stages. The dates are March 2 and May 4. As always dessert is at 6:30p.m. and the meeting is at 7:00 at the Tulsa Garden Center.

It is hard to think about planning field excursions in the snow! Look for notices on FaceBook and our website.

We continue our Fabulous Wildflower Fridays, at 5:30 the third Friday of each month at Panera at 41st Street and Hudson Avenue. We plan field trips and events, identify wildflowers and share fellowship between quarterly meetings. Regardless of your Chapter, please feel free to join us!

PHOTO CONTEST REMINDER

The following picture was submitted by Becki Sheets-Klinger and won 1st place in the "close-up" category of the 2014 ONPS Photo Contest.

This year's deadline for submission is July 1. Photo Contest information, including entry forms and rules, can be found on the ONPS website (www.oknativeplants.org).



NATIVE PLANT TRIVIA

Used extensively in landscaping in Oklahoma, this evergreen, shrub is the only plant native to North America that contains caffeine. Be the first to submit your answer to oknativeplants@yahoo.com and be recognized in the next edition of the *Gaillardia*.

FLORA OKLAHOMA INCORPORATED RELEASES NEW EDITION

Adam Ryburn

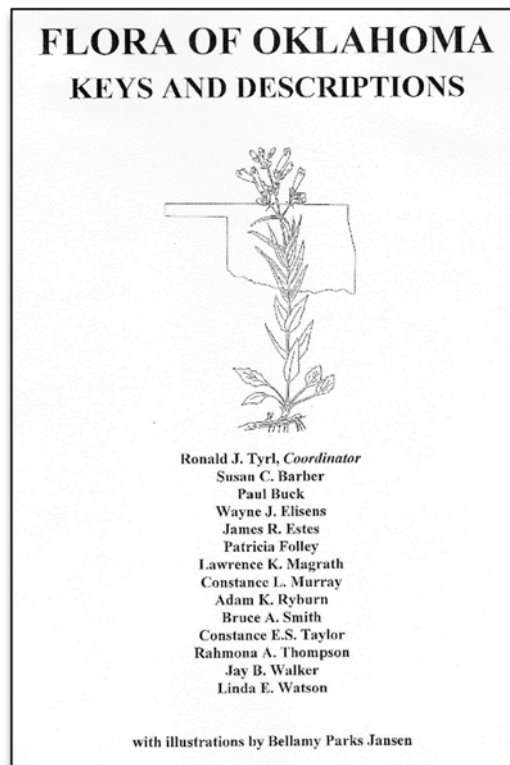
As many of you know, for the last 30 years a group of professional botanists from around the state have spent one Saturday a month working on taxonomic treatments of the vascular plant flora of our state. The result of the committee's hard work is a series of publications that has contributed to the evolution of the *Flora of Oklahoma*.

The first of these publications was in 1994 titled *Key to the Vascular Plant Families of Oklahoma*, which provide the first comprehensive family key since Waterfall in 1969; and was actually accompanied by Waterfall's publication. *Key and Descriptions for the Vascular Plant Families of Oklahoma* was published in 1997 and soon followed by *Key and Descriptions for the Vascular Plants of Oklahoma* in 1998. Over the last decade, the committee has focused on completing the treatments to the species of each plant family represented in Oklahoma (~175 families represented by ~2600 species), updating the later publication on a regular basis.

For the first time since 1998, Flora Oklahoma Incorporated has released a new publication. Changes in this edition reflect the accumulation of additional taxonomic data and new interpretations of characters in the light of phylogenetics. In this treatise, we have adopted, in general, the classifications of the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group (APGIII) and Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS). Specific taxonomic decisions as to family, genus, and species concepts are based on our field work, examination of Oklahoma herbarium specimens, and review of the literature.

For more information and instructions of how to order your copy of *Flora of Oklahoma Keys and Descriptions*, check out the Flora of Oklahoma Project website (www.biosurvey.ou.edu/floraok).

Adam Ryburn is a professor of biology at Oklahoma City University and the Coordinating Editor of *Flora Oklahoma Inc.* and past president of ONPS.



-BOOK REVIEW-

A Review of *Plant a Pocket of Prairie*, by Phyllis Root, illustrations by Betsy Bowen. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

This is a children's book that discusses the loss of prairie habitat and suggests ways a person might create "pockets" of prairie for themselves. Ms. Root talks about how prairies once covered thousands of miles but the creation of farms and towns have reduced the amount of prairie to a fraction of its original size. She then goes through a series of native plants to plant in one's own pocket of prairie and describes the birds, insects, amphibians and mammals that the plant might attract. At the back of the book there is a map that shows the difference in area once covered by prairie and how much is left. She encourages the reader to research both plants native to their area and where to get plants or seeds. There is a description of some of the animals and insects native to prairies, and where to go to see remnants of prairies that still exist.

Since this is a children's book the information is basic and the illustrations are more artistic than realistic, but it does include concepts of habitat loss, conservation and animal-plant interdependence. It would make a good guide for starting a "pocket prairie" project with a child or a classroom of children.

Reviewed by Elaine Lynch, Cross

Read a good, botanically friendly book lately? ONPS is looking for reviewers of botanically interesting books that our members might also enjoy. If you would like to provide a review, please contact Adam Ryburn via email at oknativeplants@yahoo.com.

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