



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 38, Number 2 Summer 2023

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Photo of *Penstemon cobaea* by Sandy Graue.

Upcoming Events/Activities

(check the ONPS website or Facebook for more details)

Jul 21 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays (details below)

Jul 22 - Plant Walk. Plants of the Cross Timbers
Ecoregion Where: Arcadia Lake Time: 10am
Meeting at Arcadia Lake Park Office parking lot,
9000 East 2nd Street, Arcadia, OK 73007. Wear
hiking clothes (ticks will be out) and bring water.

**Aug 3 - Central Chapter meeting, 6:30 socializing and
7 pm program at OCU Dawson-Loeffler Building.**

Aug 18 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays (details below)

**Sep 7 - Central Chapter meeting, 6:30 socializing and
7 pm program at OCU Dawson-Loeffler Building.**

**Sep 11 - NE Chapter meeting, 6:30 socializing and
7 pm program at the Tulsa Garden Center, Tulsa.**

Sep 15 - Fabulous Wildflower Fridays (details below)

**Sep 30 - ONPN Kick-off Event and Native Plant Sale.
(See Page 9)**

**Mark your calendars to attend the ONPS Annual
Meeting at Sequoyah State Park, October 6-8, 2023.
Watch the website for further details. Lodge rooms
and cabins are being held at a special rate for
ONPS, so book now.**

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, 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

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Color Oklahoma	Monica Bartling

Conservation Committee and statewide Tulsa Garden
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President's Message

By Patrick Bell, ONPS President

A Moment in Time...

On a slightly gray, cool morning in early May, a Blackburnian warbler was actively working on getting breakfast. The feast was provided by a cluster of several tall, native oaks. Surrounding this dietary oasis was 60,000 acres of extensive mixed and short grass prairie in the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge. The flora and fauna were beyond comprehension in variety, depth, and interaction. It was simply a moment in time, a brief moment out of the busy everyday. Thus, was this year's Wonders of Wildflowers weekend (WOW). Over 45 ONPS members and guests were treated to a spectacular, kaleidoscopic display of colorful flowers, plants, wildlife and nature. It was a treat both enjoyed and savored.

With that behind us, the ONPS will continue to offer field trips and gatherings through the summer; check the ONPS website, oknativeplants.org, frequently for updates and more information. And save the date; our annual meeting will be Oct. 6-8, at the Sequoyah State Park. This year we will again meet in conjunction with the Oklahoma Academy of Science. Last year's joint meeting was an overwhelming success; lots of camaraderie, plant walks, bird watching, reptiles, mammals, fossils, and even a night moth event. Something for everyone and all ages. More information will be forthcoming on the website and in the Fall *Gaillardia*.

Back to the life of that Blackburnian warbler: It may have spent the winter in Peru, and it may have been enroute to nesting grounds in northeastern Canada. They are briefly, but rarely seen in eastern Oklahoma, and not supposed to be in SW Oklahoma, at all! But then, there was habitat there. And it was there, but only for a moment, as were we. Our native plants sustain the warblers, the planet, and the humans. Let's not forget that, and all try to do a little part. Consume a little less, conserve a little more, encourage the use of native plants, step away from the busyness when we can, and cherish this beautiful world, if even for an occasional moment.

Central Chapter Update

Micah Friedman, Chair

The Central Chapter has had a great spring with some great presentations. Gus Barksdale spoke to us about ferns in Oklahoma, Jacob DeVecchio presented on local fungi, and Vonceil Harmon presented on creating monarch habitats on energy and transportation infrastructure lands. Jacob DeVecchio also led a mushroom walk at Bluff Creek Trails. The Central Chapter will be going on plant walks on June 3rd and July 22nd (be prepared for ticks). We will start back the monthly meetings in August.



Jacob DeVecchio, from Oklahoma Fungi, leading a mushroom walk at Bluff Creek Trails on May 13th.

June 10th: Plant Walk: Botanizing Disturbed Areas and Old Fields (DAOFF) at the Deep Fork River. Meeting at 10 am in front of Shoe Carnival, 1701 Belle Isle Blvd, Oklahoma City, OK 73118. We will caravan to the Deep Fork River (half a mile from the meeting spot).

July 22nd: Plant Walk: Plants of the Cross Timbers Ecoregion at Arcadia Lake. Meeting at 10 am at Arcadia Lake Park Office parking lot, 9000 East 2nd Street, Arcadia, OK 73007

August 3rd: TBA

September 7th: Grace Payne (they/them), herbarium research assistant at UCO and current biology graduate student at UCO will present their research on land-based education and invasive plant treatments in urban Oklahoma.

Northeast Chapter Update

Kathy Doss, Chapter Chair

Our March 6 meeting was standing room only, with a program by Sarah Cross from Across the Prairie, Oklahoma Native Plants and Landscapes. She shared seeds and her experiences starting up her native plant business in Tulsa. A lively question and answer period gave many attendees the hope they needed for their own native gardens.

May 1st we met Ania Waitr who is the Horticulture Curator at Philbrook Museum in Tulsa. Ania delighted the full house with her slides of Philbrook then and now. They are bringing back native plants to the gardens with phenomenal results that patrons have noticed and appreciated. We were told about their efforts starting native plants in their greenhouses for a native plant sale that was happening the weekend after our meeting.

Spring field trips kept us busy and involved with the native flora. We hosted booths at Woodward Park's Springfest and the Tulsa Audubon Society's Wildlife Habitat Garden Tour. After a summer hiatus, we will meet again the second Monday of September (the 11th), at the Tulsa Garden Center. The program has not yet been finalized.



A bride and her wedding party attended the April 22 Field trip at Oxley Nature Center as part of their Bachelorette Party. Lynn Michael shares field garlic with the group. Photo by Sandy Graue.

ONPS Wonders of Wildflowers 2023

Article by Constance Murray

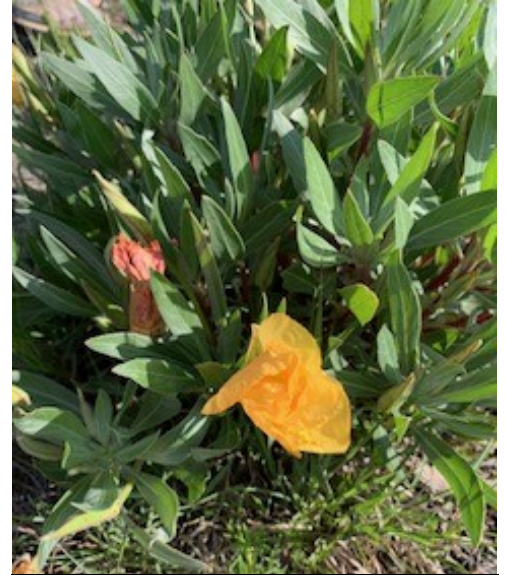
On May 5-8 fifty intrepid souls gathered in and around the Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge for a weekend of Wildflower Watching. Friday night found us at the Plantation Inn just east of the Refuge in Medicine Park for drinks, dinner, and planning. Saturday morning we gathered at the Education Center on the Refuge and began our flower foray, stopping along the road at several locations and walking onto the plains a bit. The wildflowers were abundant and at each stop the group scattered, each distracted by different wildflowers, and then sometimes coalesced



Oklahoma beardtongue, *Penstemon oklahomensis*. Photo by Sandy Graue.

around notable finds. At our first stop we found *Penstemon oklahomensis*, Oklahoma beardtongue, and *Oenothera macrophylla*, Missouri evening primrose, followed by other species too numerous to list here. Look for images of some of our finds within this newsletter.

By noon we were ready for a break at Boulder Cabin Picnic Area. After lunch we botanized down some trails around the picnic area, but the wildflowers along the trails were repetitive and not as spectacular or plentiful as in the morning. And it was 93°F. So most of us headed to the showers to prepare for dinner. We gathered for dinner at the Museum of the Great Plains in Lawton. Following dinner Connie Murray presented images and commentary from Doyle McCoy's 1970's book series *Roadside Wildflowers of Oklahoma*. The skies had looked ominous as we gathered for dinner and some slides were punctuated by thunder! And that ended the official Wonders of Wildflowers. Sunday morning there was a brief Board Meeting to which all had been invited.



Above: Missouri evening primrose, *Oenothera macrophylla*. Photo by Lynn Michael.

Below: Group photo by Joe Roberts at the Wichita Mountain Wildlife Refuge.



Following the meeting some of us walked or drove up Mount Scott, the highest point on the Refuge. Again, there were more wildflowers. One group of us even interrupted some “cactus rustlers,” but to no avail. So concluded the Wonders of Wildflowers Weekend 2023. It is an educational and entertaining event held each spring and all members are encouraged to attend.



Above: Hedgehog cactus, *Echinocereus reichenbachii*. Photo by Lynn Michael.



Above: Antelope horn milkweed, *Asclepias asperula*.



At left: Bluejackets, *Tradescantia ohiensis*. Photos by Lynn Michael.



At left: Prickly pear cactus, *Opuntia macrorhiza*.

At right: Lemon paintbrush, *Castilleja citrina*.

Photos by Lynn Michael.



Color Oklahoma

Article and photos by Monica Bartling, Color Oklahoma Chairman

It's grant application season at Color Oklahoma (CO) and our group is working to make the grant application process easier and on getting the word out to more organizations about the availability of grant funds. Complete information is on our website at ColorOklahoma.com. As a project of the Native Plant Society, we provide funding to get native wildflowers planted across the state.

How can everyone help plant wildflowers? Our organization gets \$20 from every Wildflower License Plate purchased through the State of Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission. There is a form on the CO website.



Closeup of *Gaillardia pulchella*, Indian blanket.

We are pleased to announce that we added two additional planting areas this past planting season. We added flowers around the Welcome to Oklahoma sign when you enter the state on Highway 79 in Southwestern Oklahoma, at the second turnpike exit off Interstate 44 at the Randlett exit. Additional plantings were added on the Cimarron Turnpike at the Stillwater exit and at the Intersection of State Highways 81 and 70 in Waurika, Oklahoma.

Weather really helped us this year and our new plantings and older plantings are showing a brilliant display of color with the early spring flowers and we anticipate the same with the later spring and early summer flowers.

For the new planting areas in Southwestern Oklahoma, plains coreopsis, Indian blanket, Indian paintbrush, and showy primrose were planted and we added a few pounds of the red corn poppy flowers. The corn poppy flowers tend to come up and flower the first year and add a brilliant red backdrop for the yellow plains coreopsis.

We invite everyone to check out our ColorOklahoma.com site for photos of native Oklahoma wildflowers shown by season and also to download the grant applications for organizations in your cities and towns across the state. We encourage school groups like Future Farmers of America Chapters and local garden clubs to consider adding color to their community by adding spring wildflowers.

A sea of color. This is the fourth year of planting for the center medians going North, South, East and West at the intersections of Highways 81 and 70 in Waurika. More than 135 pounds of wildflower seeds were planted by ODOT this year to cover all the entrances to Waurika. Local clubs, businesses and ranches donated \$1,000 in funds and Color Oklahoma matched the donation to order \$2,000 in seeds. Two residents of the area also ordered an additional 35 pounds of native seeds to finish planting about 14 acres of seeds.



Welcome to Oklahoma with Plains Coreopsis and a few native Indian Paintbrush. The larger Color Oklahoma signs are new this year and were installed by ODOT



Two DYCs to Know and Love

By Marilyn Stewart

Who first labeled yellow daisy-like flowers as DYCs (damned yellow composites) is lost to history, but was popularized by notables such as Lady Bird Johnson, and the neurologist and naturalist Oliver Sacks. I'm certain, though, that for thousands of years people have been staring at yellow flowers and wondering which THAT one is and most likely arguing about it with the person next to them. The John and Connie Taylor guide devotes about 14 pages of plants (listed single space) in the Asteraceae family and a large number of these are yellow. There are over twenty just in the *Helianthus* (sunflower) genera and almost 40 species of *Solidago* (goldenrod).

Keeping them straight or figuring out which is which can be a challenge. One exception are the *Silphiums* and Oklahoma has four which are native; *astericus*, *integrifolium*, *laciniatum*, and *perfoliatum*. Even the most DYC challenged among us can tell the difference between them all, but let's look closely at *laciniatum* and *perfoliatum*.



Compass plant, *Silphium laciniatum*. Photo by Prairie Moon Nursery.

Silphium laciniatum goes by such fun names as compass plant and cow ice cream. The compass plant name comes from the way the highly serrated leaves, which can be over 2 feet long, align north and south. Cow ice cream is because, according to David Redhage at The Kerr Center of Sustainability in Poteau, it is high in protein and the first plant cattle head for when let into a field. The flowers bloom atop stalks that can reach up to 9 feet, the overall texture of the plant is like sandpaper and the roots reach down 16 feet into the prairie as well.

There is a long history of medicinal uses for compass plant. The stems and roots were used for such maladies as head colds, as an emetic, and for general pain. The resinous

sap was used as a chewing gum and to sweeten the breath and clean teeth. The Omahas and Pawnees believed that lightning was common where compass plant was found and as a result they didn't camp in those areas. They also burned the dried root during electrical storms to avoid being struck by lightning.¹

Silphium perfoliatum has a different look, but like *S. laciniatum* is easily identified and common names include cup plant and carpenter's weed. The triangular leaves, which can be up to

(DYCs continued on Page 8)



Cup plant, *Silphium perfoliatum*. Photo by Prairie Moon Nursery.

(DYCs continued from Page 7)

14 inches long, clasp the stem and form a cup that collects rain and dew. The 6-9 foot stem, and I assume this is where the carpenter's weed name comes from, is perfectly square. Like all Silphiums the texture of the plant is rough, but unlike compass plant, this one grows in wetter conditions and can tolerate some shade.

Many tribes used cup plant roots as a smoke treatment, inhaling the fumes for head colds, arthritis, and nerve pain. A scientific study done in 1988 showed that an extract and ointment made from cup plant was found to increase the healing rate of burns.² Young spring leaves can be foraged and cooked.

Both of these majestic Silphiums are beneficial to wildlife. I've seen many of our native bees, wasps and butterflies feeding at the flowers and observed hummingbirds not only nectaring on the flowers, but also sipping morning dew collected in the cups of the cup plant. Birds relish the seeds. We should appreciate them.

¹ Kelly Kindscher, Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie: University Press of Kansas, 1992, 201.

² Kelly Kindscher, Medicinal Wild Plants of the Prairie: University Press of Kansas, 1992, 202.



Indian blanket along an Oklahoma roadside. Photo by Lynn Michael.

Welcome New Members

Added 2/10/2023 thru 5/21/23

February: Margy McClain, Cameron Shults,
Susan Brosky, Stephanie Bacoski, Jae Smith,
Patti Ingram

March: Teresa Goodwin, Elizabeth Page,
Cici Wyrick, Sharon Van Dyke, Laura Reynolds,
Lisa Whitworth

April: Maigan Underwood, Elizabeth Gadsby,
Lourdes Ponce, Liz Blood, Hannah Clark,
Leah Elam, DeJon Knapp, Kathleen Arrieta,
Janet Skates

May: Lysbeth Fernandez, Lara James,
Adrienne Gautier, Lara James,
Catherine Seagraves, Brayden McKelvey,
Rochelle Somers, Hanna Marchant,
Edith Maxey, Acar Handan

Contributions

2/10/2023 thru 5/22/23

General Fund: Margaret Ewing, Diana Farmer,

Barbara Klein, Judy Stoyanoski, Various

Color Oklahoma: Barry L. Redlinger

Grow Some Wild Seeds!

Oklahoma Native Plant Network

By Marilyn Stewart

We have a problem in Oklahoma and depending on your point of view it's either a good one or a bad one. Sort of a glass half empty/half full sort of problem.

The good news is that more and more people, especially young homeowners, don't want lawns or the standard boxwood on either side of the front door and a few nandina marching across the front with a holly at the end. They want native plants. Same with businesses and cities who hire a landscape architect and specify that the plantings be native.

But here's the problem: how does the landscaper or even the homeowner find those plants? The big box stores don't carry many natives and if they do, they tend to be hybrids and nativars and unfortunately the same goes for most of the locally owned nurseries. And the landscaper might need 800 1-gallon little bluestem and 400 1-gallon purple prairie clover, but those plants in those numbers are difficult if not impossible to find.

The Oklahoma Native Plant Network is a new organization with the goal to address these issues. We are still in the formative stages, but are making great progress. Our main goals are as follows:

- Increase the awareness of the public about planting Oklahoma natives. One way this could be done is by growers labeling chosen natives each year. Labels would have growing information, the region of Oklahoma where it is native, and historical info.
- Sponsor one or more native plant sales across the state in the fall. By increasing demand for native plants, it is hoped that more growers will emerge and established growers will recognize the market for natives is profitable.
- Establish a network for landscapers and growers to communicate availability and need.
- Encourage horticulture students to consider becoming native plant growers.
- Be a resource for those wishing to become native plant growers.

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society has graciously agreed to take this new initiative under its wing and while the two groups are similar, ONPN could be considered more of an outreach while ONPS concentrates more on education.

The individuals at the helm of ONPN include landscape architects, educators, landscapers, and growers. Tags are being designed for the 10 plants being highlighted this year. Sponsors are needed to help fund programs—ONPN will be self-funding and will not receive funds from ONPS.

Our kickoff event will be held on September 30th in Oklahoma City at the Oklahoma County OSU Extension Center at 2500 NE 63rd St. This will be a native plant sale and include activities for children and workshops. Benjamin Vogt, author of Prairie Up!, will speak (remotely) about how to turn an area into natives.

Make plans to attend our fall event to support this new initiative ONPN and ONPS!

Editor's Note: The 10 plants are: (1) purple coneflower, *Echinacea purpureum*; (2) Maximillion sunflower, *Helianthus maximilliani*; (3) aromatic aster, *Aster oblongifolius*; (4) Indian grass, *Sorghastrum nutans*; (5) little bluestem, *Schizachyrium scoparium*; (6) coralberry, *Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*; (7) beautyberry, *Callicarpa americana*; (8) coral honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*; (9) orange coneflower, *Rudbeckia fulgida*; (10) Indian cherry, *Frangula caroliniana*.

Meet the Members: Marilyn Stewart

Article by Fran Stallings

Marilyn Stewart's first memories are of butterflies and plants: watching skippers on zinnias. Growing up in Oklahoma City, she always loved gardening and plants – especially if there were butterflies on them. Her parents fed her obsession, driving her to sites with wild cherry trees in hopes of seeing tiger swallowtails. The Little Golden Book about insects helped her identify Goatweed Leaf-wings she found on the road coming home from school. She loved the smell of dirt; the garden was her happy place.

Although her father suggested majoring in horticulture at OSU, she cringed at the chemistry requirement and chose Literature/Black Studies with a minor in Art History. (Her parents had also encouraged her drawing and painting.) In retrospect, she's glad she didn't take a conventional path into horticulture because the commercial emphasis then was on non-natives.

Moving to Dallas for her husband's job, Marilyn finished her BA at the University of Texas at Dallas. But 12 years of Texas were enough: they missed Oklahoma and moved back near her parents' 20 acres in Seminole. While raising kids in a country house, she painted tiles for back-splashes and other custom work. A job at a conventional nursery addicted her to plants growing in a greenhouse...

But she never wanted to look at another petunia. When their dog needed expensive surgery and the vet mentioned his desire to re-landscape his clinic with native/beneficial plants, it confirmed that natives were what she wanted to work with! Wild Things Nursery was the result. (The dog lived several more years.)

Marilyn has worked hard as a native plant grower. She runs one greenhouse January to April, but overwinters most species outdoors. Most are started from seed for biodiversity vs monoculture cuttings. She prefers the straight species to nativars.

She says her first ONPS meeting was at Susan Chambers' house. Susan's "relaxed" yard inspired her to join ONPS! She has since served our organization in many ways, particularly as past Editor of our quarterly Gaillardia newsletter.

Marilyn only sells plants at shows such as the spring herb festivals in Sand Springs and Jenks where her "traveling nursery" was swarmed by eager customers. She says it's fun to meet them and her fellow growers, Bill Farris and MaryAnn King in particular, because they all want to help each other. Learning this trade would have been very hard without them. Though there are lots of books, it can be better to listen to people share their trial & error about how to grow natives. More voices are out there now, and the internet is helping.

Marilyn says that when she started the nursery so many years ago, her dear husband Ken definitely stepped out of his comfort zone as an accountant and learned how to build a greenhouse. He's been her biggest supporter and is of course the carrier of soil bags, loader of vehicles, transplanter, basically does anything that needs to be done and does it cheerfully! We all thank you, Ken!

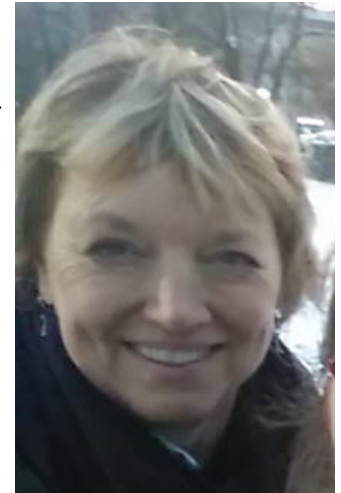
Marilyn has enjoyed seeing how the native plant movement has grown in 21 years. "We can't overestimate the impact of Doug Tallamy!!" Her customers are getting younger and younger. They understand the importance of natives vs. Bermuda grass. At a recent OSU panel of landscape designers, college professors, and growers, the horticulture students wanted to grow natives, not cannabis!!

Because more customers now want native plants, Marilyn is working with a group of educators, growers, and landscape designers to start the Oklahoma Native Plant Network under ONPS auspices. Its goal is to increase demand and production so landscapers and consumers can get the plants and quantities they need. Following the practice of Missouri's "Grow Native" group, they will produce special tags for 10 species. Their first Network native plant sale will be this fall at the OSU Extension office in Oklahoma City. (See related article in this issue page 9.)

Meanwhile, Marilyn tries to paint every day for sanity and therapy. She works in oils and acrylics on canvas or boards and sometimes uses colored pencils on sanded paper. She does not produce paintings to sell but occasionally enters shows where she may sell. After documenting all the trees on their land, she is now painting the forbs. Her gorgeous photographic greeting cards began because someone said there are no wildflowers in Oklahoma! She picked and scanned some from her front yard and a new business was born.

Marilyn says, "Each plant needs a story, then it becomes something valuable." She cites ethnobotanical uses: the plant may not be beautiful but it becomes important. "Don't ignore the tiniest plant, it's there for a reason!"

Marilyn Stewart, Marilyn@wildthingsnursery.com (405) 255-1707



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 ____ Student (\$10) (free with faculty sponsor)

Chapter affiliation:

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

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

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Summer 2023 Issue

If the date on your label is **highlighted**
this could be your last newsletter.

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FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE IS Aug 5, 2023**



Indian blanket and coreopsis along an Oklahoma roadside. Photo by Lynn Michael.

FIELD TRIPS!!!!!!!

Registration is not required, but suggested to ensure everyone gets needed information and directions. For more information and additional impromptu plant/mushroom walks email jennmichael54@gmail.com put ONPS Field Trip as the subject line.