

A Special Thank You



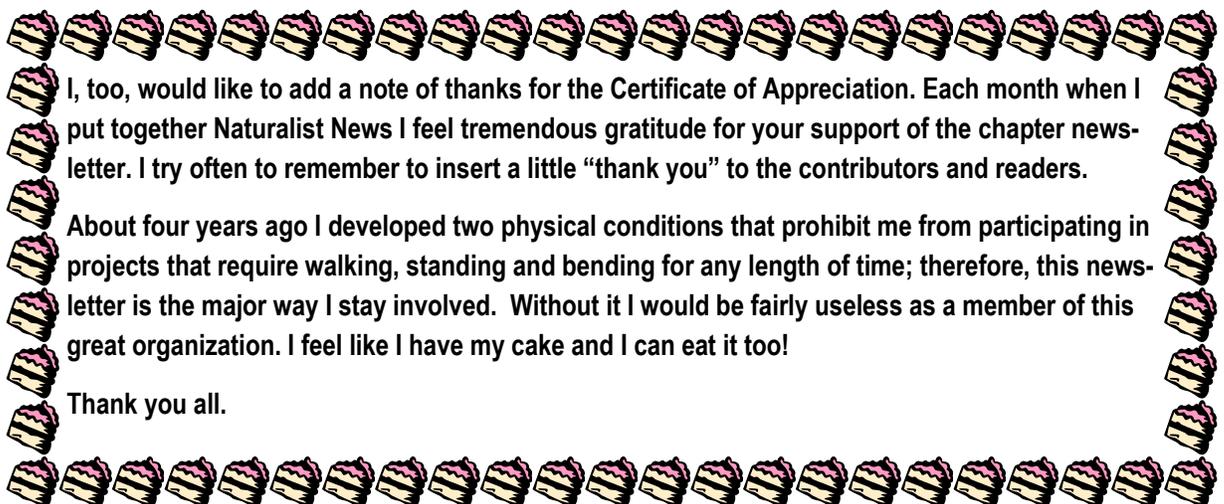
Scott Kiester and Ray Kreutzfeld

To My Elm Fork Family,

I was surprised, and I am grateful to have been selected 2015 Volunteer of the Year. I follow my curiosity, learning and teaching about the nature that is all around us every day. We all became Master Naturalists to learn and educate and leave a greener world to those who will follow us. Far too few know what this place was like when God was the landlord and the major tenants were bison and elk. We all help to preserve that vanishing world, and help others find a connection to it. Just look at us! Over 22,000

volunteer hours in the last year alone. Our active projects stretch from Wise County to Anderson County. We touch on virtually every branch of the natural sciences, sharing our passion and interest as often as we can, and we do it all while having fun playing outdoors. I am honored, because I know that everyone in our chapter is special. I thank all of you for your dedication and effort.

Scott

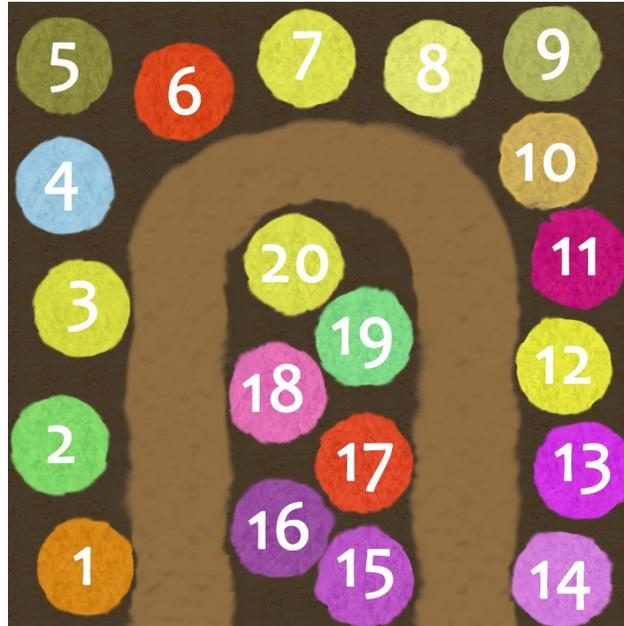
I, too, would like to add a note of thanks for the Certificate of Appreciation. Each month when I put together Naturalist News I feel tremendous gratitude for your support of the chapter newsletter. I try often to remember to insert a little “thank you” to the contributors and readers. About four years ago I developed two physical conditions that prohibit me from participating in projects that require walking, standing and bending for any length of time; therefore, this newsletter is the major way I stay involved. Without it I would be fairly useless as a member of this great organization. I feel like I have my cake and I can eat it too!

Thank you all.



Class of 2015 Project Workday February 3, 2015

Aside from the confusion about the meeting time, we had a good turnout. Most of the Workday was spent finalizing the Pocket Garden design and Wildflower placement. The design has a U-shaped 3 foot path through it, exiting and entering from the Prairie Trail.



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| 1. butterfly weed- <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i> | 11. wine cup- <i>Callirhoe involucrata</i> |
| 2. antelope horns- <i>Asclepias asperula</i> | 12. yellow puff- <i>Neptunia lutea</i> |
| 3. Texas yellow star- <i>Lindheimeria texana</i> | 13. sensitive briar- <i>Mimosa roemeriana</i> |
| 4. Little bluestem- <i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i> | 14. lemon beebalm- <i>Monarda citriodora</i> |
| 5. witch grass- <i>Panicum virgatum</i> | 15. American basketflower- <i>Centaurea americana</i> |
| 6. Indian blanket- <i>Gaillardia pulchella</i> | 16. prairie verbena- <i>Glandularia bipinnatifida</i> |
| 7. maximilian sunflower- <i>Helianthus maximiliani</i> | 17. Indian paintbrush- <i>Castilleja indivisa</i> |
| 8. Fringed puccoon- <i>Lithospermum incisum</i> | 18. meadow pink- <i>Sabatia campestris</i> |
| 9. bushy bluestem- <i>Andropogon glomeratus</i> | 19. green milkweed- <i>Asclepias viridis</i> |
| 10. inland sea oats- <i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i> | 20. green thread- <i>Thelesperma filifolium</i> |

The Interpretive Pocket Prairie (IPP) is 20 feet long by 20 feet wide. The path through the IPP will be approximately 3 feet wide and will consist of mulch. Mulch will also form the border of the IPP, and each spring, new newspaper will be laid under the mulch border to prevent weeds. Watering and maintenance of the IPP will be performed by a team of EFCMN volunteers. Composite dropseed (*Sporobolus compositus*) will be planted with Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja indivisa*) in spot 17 as *C. indivisa* is semiparasitic. As some plants may be difficult to propagate or maintain, alternatives have been selected and include gayfeather (*Liatriis mucronata*), partridge pea (*Chamaecrista fasciculata*), and cutleaf daisy (*Engelmannia peristenia*). All plants are native to the Clear Creek prairie.

I would like to thank Sue for all the research and preparation of the flower list. Cecily did a great job moving around the flower circles on our grid square until each plant site was determined. Nicole is going to prepare the documents with the list and pictures of the flowers. Theresa Page is donating some of her personal seed collection to help us get started with the seeding process. I would like to thank Toni Benjamin for braving the cold and wind to water the compost layer



Beck Bertoni, Mary Cissell, Cecily Pegues, Brenda Maston, Kaye Jackson, Sue Stunich



Cecily Pegues, Denise Remfert, Sue Stunich, Mary Cissell, Brenda Maston



Theresa Page



Toni Benjamin, Brenda Maston

Now that the planning and design have been finalized our Class of 2015 can concentrate on our little piece of prairie and restoring it with colorful Denton wildflowers.

You're Invited!

Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition 2015

Appreciation Reception

Wednesday, April 13—4:30 pm to 6:30 pm

DISD Professional Development Center—1212 Bolivar Street, Denton, Texas

Please join us to show our appreciation and recognize the fourth grade students and their art teachers that participated in the art exhibition and to thank the display site hosts. Stop by at your convenience and join the fun, support our chapter and see the kids show off their artwork.

Thank you,

Marilyn Blanton, Project Manager

Here's a few of the Best of Show paintings.

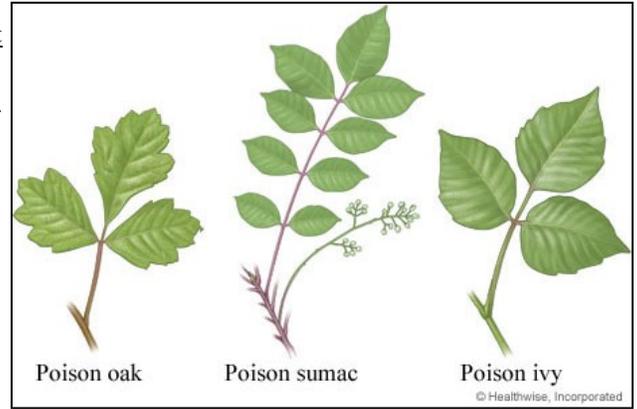


Super Poisons

by Dr. Larry Legg

Lewis Ziska, PhD, a weed ecologist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Beltsville, Md., and a co-researcher on two recent studies has concluded climate change is producing “super poisons.” Poison ivy, Toxicodendron radicans, poison oak, Toxicodendron diversilobum, and poison sumac, Toxicodendron vernix, that is.

As you are aware the plants are not really poisonous, but they contain a sticky, long-lasting oil called urushiol(you-ROO-shee-all) that causes an itchy, blistering rash after it makes contact with skin. The slightest contact, even brushing up against the leaves, can leave urushiol on your clothing or skin.



Warming oceans, increasing temperatures and loss of polar ice are well known results of climate change and now we can add the increased chance of contacting a really bad case of poison ivy. Increased carbon dioxide is not only boosting the growth of poison ivy additionally it is also increasing the concentration of urushiol in the plants. The urushiol is not only more plentiful; it is more potent.

Ziska’s research found over the past 50 years the growth rate of poison ivy has doubled. “The chances of encountering poison ivy and coming down with a rash are greater than used to be.”

If you are one of the 80% of people sensitive to urushiol your chances of itching, blisters and misery are increasing. Additionally, the chances of getting a potentially serious skin infection from scratching increased due to the potency of the urushiol. Some research suggest if you are not initially allergic the more times you encounter urushiol the greater your chances of developing a rash.

It appears that touching the plant may not be necessary to have the oil bind with your skin. If the person in front of you on the trail touches the plant, the oil temporarily suspends in air and can land on you. That all it takes!

Personal note: Growing up in backwoods Mississippi it was common practice to clear land through “slash and burn” which included burning poison sumac and poison ivy. Two kids I knew almost died from inhaling the urushiol laden smoke.

“Once it is absorbed there is little that can be done” reports Ziska. Most people don’t know they have come into contact until hours later or even longer. Typically, there is itching, redness, swelling and the rash; a reaction usually occurs within 12 to 48 hours according to the American Academy of Dermatology. “A typical case of poison ivy generally subsides within a week or so” says Wally Ghurabi, DO, chief of emergency services at Santa Monica-UCLA Medical. But not always he points out. If your poison ivy rash and discomfort seem to get worse, it may be time to see your doctor or even go to your local emergency department. When you see increased redness and swelling, when the area is warm to the touch and the rash is spreading, go to the doctor, The really bad news is, sometimes, a secondary infection can set in, and things can turn serious, such as a bloodstream infection requiring hospitalization.