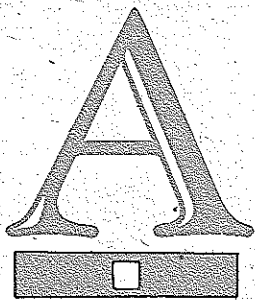


WILDFLOWER

The Newsletter of the National Wildflower Research Center Volume 3, Number 2 Summer 1986

A non-profit organization, dedicated to researching and promoting wildflowers to further their economic, environmental, and aesthetic use.

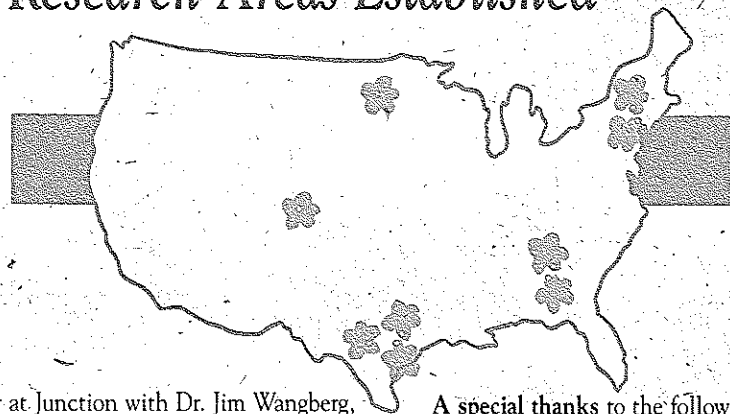
Our National Scope Continues To Grow Supplemental Research Areas Established



As part of our long range research program, the NWRC is working to develop cooperative research efforts in

different regions of the country. To date we are pleased to announce that wildflower field trial plots are being established at the following institutions: Farmingdale University, New York under the supervision of Dr. Dave Sanford; Clark Garden, New York with Dr. Howard Irwin; Atlanta Botanic Gardens, Georgia with Laura Martin; Callaway Gardens, Georgia with Dr. Bill Barrick; Denver Botanic Gardens, Colorado with Gayle Weinstein; and the University of North Dakota with Dr. John LaDuke.

These programs supplement our own field plots here at the Center and at the LBJ Ranch and those established last year in cooperation with Texas Tech University



Center at Junction with Dr. Jim Wangberg, and Southwest Texas State University and the Federal Fish and Wildlife Fish Hatchery at San Marcos, Texas with Dr. Paul Fonteyn and Dr. Ed Schneider.

As we gain new information from these projects, our ability to provide guidance in the establishment and management of native plants in these regions of the country will be substantially improved. Through our Clearinghouse, our newsletter and our new journal, we will disseminate this information.

A special thanks to the following seed companies who have been supportive of our research efforts and have donated seed to be used in these field trials:

Applewood Seed Company, Arvada, Colorado
Environmental Seed Producers, El Monte, California
NPI, Inc. (formerly Native Plants Incorporated) Salt Lake City, Utah
Clyde Robin Seed Company, Hayward, California
S&S Seed Company, Santa Barbara, California
Wildseed, Inc., Houston, Texas.

If You Want More of Wildflower...

People from all fifty states are on the Wildflower mailing list. The newsletter is offered as a membership benefit, however many donors and interested wildflower lovers are also on the list.

Due to the increased expense of mailing to such a large constituency, we will need to limit the size of our mailing beginning with the Winter 1986-87 issue of Wildflower.

To find out whether you are a member or donor, and will continue to receive our news, take a look at the mailing label. If it has an asterisk prior to the eight digit number printed on the upper left corner of the

label, you will continue to receive the newsletter. However if there is no asterisk on the label, you are not a member or donor and from this winter we will no longer be able to include you in our mailings.

We know you will want to continue to receive all our news and wildflower information. Please take the time to fill out a membership application for your annual membership and mail it to us today, to ensure being counted as one who cares about our wildflower heritage, for now and the generations to come!

Center News

■ The National Wildflower Research Center is open year round for tours, and visitors are assured a cordial welcome to our facilities.

If you are planning a trip to the Austin area, please come out. Call (512) 929-3607 for tour information from March through May, and (512) 929-3600 the remaining months of the year.

■ Have you seen our Public Service Announcements aired in your television area? If you have, please let us know by dropping a postcard to the Center in care of Deborah Mullins. Please list the date and time of the announcement and on which station it was aired. The PSAs are being distributed across the nation to targeted markets.

Sorting Out Seed Sources

Companies Differ on Philosophy

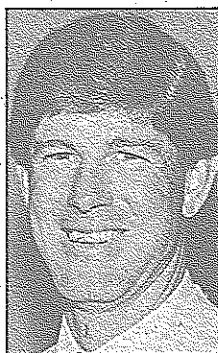
David Northington, Executive Director

Without question, the most frequent request of the Information Clearinghouse is for our wildflower seed source lists. Regional and state lists of seed retailers are constantly updated, and a list of large seed companies who market wildflower mixes is also available.

The second question is usually which seed company or seed mix do we recommend? Because we are a non-profit research organization, our policy is not to endorse any company or product over another. However, since we have planted test field trials for most of the readily available mixes, we do have some general recommendations based on our results.

There are two basic philosophies currently prevalent among seed companies. There is the "natives only" approach usually found with smaller seed suppliers who field collect in their area and produce mixes for sale locally. These mixes often work very well, but are not widely marketed, and are not readily available to the general public.

The other philosophy is a "shotgun" approach that includes seed of 20 to 30 or more different species, some of which will be successful in any area of the country, even though only a few might grow wild in a particular area. Our field trials have clearly indicated that wildflower species native to an immediate region are more suc-



Dr. David Northington

cessful than introductions by 3 to 1. In addition, those few non-indigenous species that do flower such as cornflower and bachelor button, can produce a good show the first year but do not appear to reseed successfully. Again, many seed companies' goal is for a good show from these and other annuals that will reseed successfully and will be supplemented by perennials that will add to the display in the second and subsequent years.

Most of the large seed producers are now moving toward the "natives only" approach by preparing regional mixes that include fewer total species, with a higher percentage of those included being native to some or most of the geographic area for which the mix is designed. This regional division may vary from designing mixes for only two regions, eastern and western United States, to as many as nine or ten areas such as southwest, southeast, midwest, northeast, northwest. We are encouraged by this development and although these regional mixes are still based on the shotgun philosophy of wanting to provide as high a likelihood of success as possible, this is clearly a step in the right direction.


The best quality control over what you purchase is ultimately you, the consumer.

Ideally, you should try to find out as complete answers to the following questions as possible:


- What wildflower species are included in the mix and which of these are indigenous to your area? Some companies include a species list on the packaging and you will have to look up which are indigenous.
- What percentage by volume of the total mix is each of the species, and is there inexpensive bulk seed included as a high percentage of the mix?
- What percentage of the material in the package is seed versus other inert material, such as chaff and other pieces of non-seed plant parts?
- What is the germination test result for each species? A lower germination rate indi-

DIRECTOR'S R-E-P-O-R-T

cates more of that species needs to be included for a reasonable chance of a good stand of flowers.

Our advice is to begin the purchasing process early and determine as many of these factors as possible by obtaining seed catalogs, making phone calls to the producers, and researching which species should do well in your area. After comparison shopping, purchase your seed and plant an area using appropriate ground preparation, seeding technique, and establishment procedures. All this information is available as fact sheets from our Clearinghouse. Evaluate your results and plan future plantings accordingly. *Plan, plant, be patient and be persistent*, the results are well worth the effort! 

The building has been placed at right angles to the southern end of the existing building, with an 8 foot enclosed walkway joining the two. The larger job of interior reconstruction has taken longer, but we are now completely moved in to the portions of the building made ready for occupancy.

The development office, public media, volunteer activities, herbarium, research labs and offices have been moved into these new quarters. This has cleared our educational gallery, long used for offices, and provided much needed space for our library and clearinghouse activities, as well as more than tripled our research space and volunteer work area. 

New Building Provides Growth Area

*Additional space is a boon
to us.*

Dr. David Northington

Good news! In mid-February the Center acquired additional office space. Phenomenal growth had us bulging out all four sides of the present offices, which are just two years old. The 2,800 square foot, eight year old second building is on loan from Bank of the Hills, Austin where it was the original bank building. As the bank has grown and moved into new offices, they had no need for this 40 foot x 70 foot prefabricated structure.

On February 5 at 4:30 a.m. the building arrived at the Center on trailers and cut in three pieces, under police escort. Within three weeks it was set on cement piers, joined together, and electrical and plumbing work completed.

FROM THE M·A·I·L·B·O·X

July 17, 1986—*Wildflower Identification Seminar* at the State Arboretum of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. Learn to identify 1,200 species of plants of the Wasatch Mountains. Contact: The State Arboretum of Utah, Building 436, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

July 26, 1986—*Home Landscaping: Microhabitats, Rock Work and Low-tech Greenhouses* at the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute, near Fort Davis, Texas. Contact: CDRI Education Director, Box 1334, Alpine, TX 79831 (915) 837-8370.

August 7-9, 1986—*Third Annual Conference on Landscaping with Native Plants* in Cullowhee, North Carolina. Contact: Dr. Jim Horton, Western Carolina University, Department of Biology, Cullowhee, NC 28723.

August 9 and September 13, 1986—*Edible Wild Plants Workshop and Feast* at the State Arboretum of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah. Led by seasoned collector to marshes, foothills, and canyons to collect edible plants. Contact: The State Arboretum of Utah, Building 436, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.



Phyllis Hand

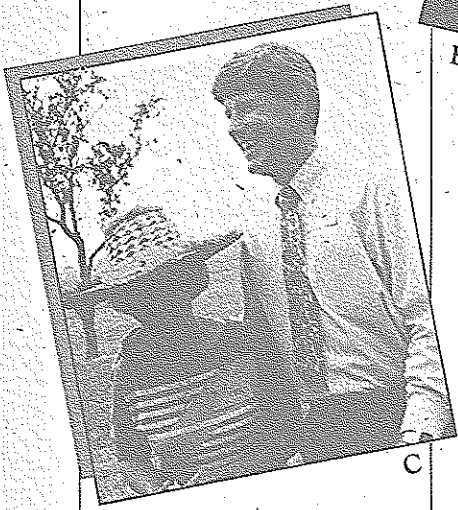
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Spring Celebrations!

(A) May's Galveston Island *Hearts & Wildflowers* event featured the inspired performances of NWRC Co-chairman and legendary actress Helen Hayes; Round Top founder, pianist James Dick; treasured opera grande dame Dorothy Kirsten; and playwright, director, and film producer Horton Foote. (B) Trustee Beth Calloway and husband Bo of Colorado take time with Lady Bird Johnson during the May house party at the LBJ Ranch. (C) NWRC Member Lil Flagg with Dr. David Northington at the Spring Festival Open House for members in April. (D) June's Volunteer Party had everyone lining up for good food. Popeye's Chicken Mike Blackwood serves volunteer Velma Lee Guinn.



B



C



D

Thanks!

Again, a grateful thank you to all of you who donated so generously after we published our needs list in the Winter 1985-86 *Wildflower*. Due to popular demand we are again listing some items from our needs list.

New carpeting and office furniture for four offices in research wing; five window air conditioning units; color TV for use with VCR; two lovely director's chairs for editor's office; VCR camera and battery pack.

Our list is long, so call if you have something you wish to donate which is not listed above but you feel we may need. Your gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed under federal and state laws and all contributions are greatly appreciated.

Journal Planned For Winter '86-'87

As we briefly announced in the last issue of *Wildflower*, we are planning a new publication. As yet unnamed, it will be a 6" x 9", 32 page minimum, journal designed to provide an outlet for research information on wildflowers written for public consumption and application.

University researchers, botanic garden professionals, horticulturists, the nursery industry, land planners and landscape designers, our own research staff, and others from related fields and government agencies will be invited to submit manuscripts for publication.

Unlike most technical journals that publish articles, written by professionals in a

given field of interest for others in that discipline, our journal will be for everyone interested in the conservation, propagation and use of wildflowers and native grasses, shrubs, and trees.

We welcome your suggestions for subjects you would find of great interest and a name for this publication. Look out for the first issue in the mail this winter.

Executive Director: Dr. David Northington
Associate Director: Carolyn Curtis
Editor: Mae Daniller
Art Director: Deborah Mullins

Wildflower is the newsletter of the National Wildflower Research Center. It is financed through contributions from friends. Material contained herein may be reprinted with the proper written acknowledgement of the editor. Address all correspondence to *Wildflower*, National Wildflower Research Center, 2600 FM 973 North, Austin, TX 78725.

Botanist On Board

Annie Paulson, our resident resource botanist, has joined the advisory board of Xeriscape, Austin. The board, which is administered through the Resource Management Department of the City of Austin, has as its major goals water and energy conservation through the establishment of creative landscapes in Austin and the surrounding utility districts. We congratulate her on this additional appointment and her service to the community. If you are interested in establishing a Xeriscape program in your area, write to the National Xeriscape Council, Inc., 8080 South Holly, Littleton, Colorado 80122 (303) 779-8864.

How To Become A NWRC Member

Your membership donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed under Federal and State laws. For information concerning the benefits of each level of membership, please contact the Center. Return to: Membership, National Wildflower Research Center, 2600 FM 973 North, Austin, TX 78725.

\$25 Supporting Member
 \$250 Center Sponsor

\$50 Sustaining Member
 \$500 Trust Member

\$100 Key Member
 \$1000 Benefactor

Please make your check or money order payable to "NWRC."

From: *Title/Name*
Address

Bankcard Information

Please provide the following information if you wish to charge your membership donation:

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Phone Number - day

Card Number _____ Expiration date _____

Name as it appears on the card (please print) _____

Signature _____

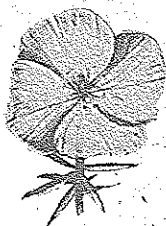
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