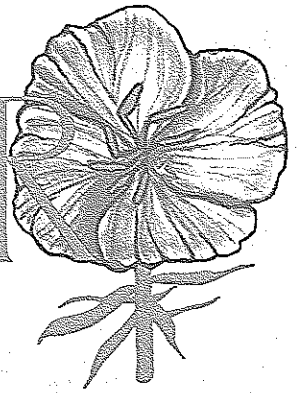


# WILDFLOWER



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

## Keeping the neighbors happy about your yard takes work

Ordinances dictating how properties must be maintained have been vague and subjectively interpreted when the target is nontraditional landscaping. In much of the Midwest, most lawn and weed citations are driven by complaints from unhappy neighbors. Because most ordinances are vague, some cities — such as Chicago, Ill. and Minnetonka, Minn. — are in the middle of lawsuits involving neighbors and nontraditional landscapes.

“Keeping the neighbors happy” quickly translates into keeping them informed. Many misconceptions exist about native grasses and wildflowers, including the beliefs that they:

- Cause allergies. Common ragweed (a native that is not deliberately planted) and bluegrass (a non-native) causes allergies. Other native grasses and wildflowers have not been proven culpable, not even the goldenrods.

- Will attract rats. Rats thrive in a very urban environment. Native plants will attract butterflies and birds.

- Are habitat for breeding mosquitoes. Mosquitoes require standing water for the reproductive process.

- Are noxious weeds. In Minnesota, like many states, the noxious weed list is limited to 10 species. Only one, poison ivy, is a native plant. Clearly, anyone with a nontraditional lawn, like anyone with a traditional one, should be responsible enough to remove any noxious weed.

- Must be burned to be maintained. Fire is one management tool, but studies now show that annual mowing and raking can have successful results.

- Will take over the neighborhood. Native plants are not generally “wild” in that sense of the word, and few are considered invasive. The non-native dandelion from another neighbor’s yard should cause more concern. Bluegrass turf is more likely to invade native plantings than vice versa.

- Are weedy looking. This can be partially true. The first two or three years of establishment can look somewhat unkempt. Early summer or late fall mowings can give a tidy look. Explaining

to your neighbors that their patience will be rewarded can help.

- Need no maintenance. This is not true, especially in an urban setting. Invading weeds always will need control. Existing weed seeds and those carried in by birds and mammals will require control, as with any garden. However, after establishment, no fertilizers or irrigation should be necessary, so this approach is a low-maintenance one.

Another misconception is that letting

your lawn go unmowed is the easiest way to establish a wild, natural lawn. This is totally false! Residential sites are disturbed throughout their development, so native grass and wildflower seeds rarely survive in

soils. Because of disturbance, the first pioneers to appear likely will include dandelions, bromes, and thistles — undesirable in any neighborhood.

Because of lawsuits and other conflicts related to naturalistic landscapes, officials from various cities contacted our Midwest Regional Office seeking guidelines and information about nontraditional lawns. In response to the overwhelming requests for information, our office and the City of Bloomington, Minn. sponsored a workshop last November for municipal decision-makers in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area to examine existing ordinances.

The officials noted that some of the ordinances were vague and did not assure the homeowner’s civil rights. They urged homeowners to use landscape plans to document the intent to have naturalistic yards, but plans could not legally be required. In short: They agreed that ordinances and requirements should be kept simple to keep the neighbors happy.

One of the workshop speakers, Chicago lawyer Bret Rappaport, believes the issue should be addressed in the

already existing nuisance section of city laws. Rappaport, who is representing five homeowners in a weed ordinance lawsuit against the City of Chicago, believes that “untended, rank, and uncontrolled vegetation” should be defined as a public nuisance, and that citations should be issued through the existing citation framework.

But “untended, rank, and uncontrolled” are adjectives that can be debated. The city officials who attended



the workshop agreed that a standard of “care” would be easier to define. The bottom line: If your idea of “care” includes the use of native grasses and wildflowers, perhaps your neighbors could be kept happy by explaining your plan

and clarifying their misconceptions.

The Midwest Office is reviewing some of the revisions in progress in the area and will share information about the issue with cities throughout the Midwest.

Bonnie Harper-Lore  
Midwest Office Coordinator  
National Wildflower Research Center

Contact local county extension agents and encourage them to promote native plants.

**GIFTS INSIDE**

# Don't uproot the natives: Buy propagated plants

In our enthusiasm to incorporate local native plants into our planned landscapes, we need to keep in mind one of the most important reasons for their use. Beyond the aesthetic considerations of color, texture, and seasonal change — and beyond the economic savings from reduced watering, fertilizing, and maintenance costs — we incorporate indigenous natives into our landscaped areas to increase the number of native plants in our world. Past practice has been to remove native plants when developing land for human use and replace them, for aesthetic reasons only, with introduced exotics. In the future, we must reestablish those same native species that were removed.

To realize a net gain of native plants in our world, we must ensure that we plant only propagated and nursery grown individuals. Except for valid rescue digging, removing a plant from the wild to transplant to planned landscapes results in a net loss of native plants because a certain percentage of those plants will not successfully transplant and

will die. But even if 100 percent of all plants dug from the wild could be transplanted successfully, doing so still would be wrong because their removal contributes to ecological imbalance in the community from which they were removed. Relocating these plants is all that is happening.

We can enjoy positive results from using indigenous native species in our home, school, and business landscapes, as well as parks, roadsides, and other planned areas. Use plants that have been propagated from seeds that were properly collected from the wild, or from cuttings grown in containers to the desired size.

Some of the issues concerning the cultivation of native plants and the use of those dug from the wild revolve around semantics. If asked — and one should always ask — most nurseries will clarify whether a plant is propagated or dug; however, the terms "containerized" and "container-grown" sometimes are applied to plants that have been dug from the wild and then put into a container for sale or for growing larger before sale. The implication of course is that these

plants were propagated and then container-grown — clearly misleading terminology!

Conversely, not all plants that are balled in burlap are dug from the wild, although most are. A few nurseries have planted propagated shrub and tree seedlings in a tree farm to be watered and fertilized for maximum growth into specimen-sized individuals, then they dig them and wrap the root ball in burlap or box it for transport.

The key issue is our desire to add to the number of native plants, not further reduce or even relocate those plants. Only using propagated plants will accomplish this. Be aware of the terms often used, understand what they may really mean, and ask the important questions.



David K. Northington, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the National Wildflower Research Center.

## Wildflower

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## WILDFLOWER CENTER NEWS

The Center's Wildflower Days festival is set for April 11-12. The annual festival will be held from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. both days and will feature guided wildflower walks, native plant gardening information, a native plant sale, children's activities, refreshments, and live music. The event is free, but a \$2 donation per vehicle is encouraged.

The Center will offer expanded spring hours this year. We'll be open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays from April 4 to May 10, in addition to our year-round hours, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. A \$2 donation per vehicle is encouraged.

New members on the Center's Board of Trustees are Peggy Beckman of Abilene, Texas; Sadie Blackburn and Rosanette Cullen of Houston; Ambassador Peter Dailey of San Marino, Calif.; Joffa Kerr of Oklahoma City; Karen Meck of Pittsburgh; Betsy Stern of Scarsdale, N.Y.; and Jane White of Marfa, Texas. New Advisory Council members are Mike Alder of Salt Lake City; Robert Hardesty of Washington, D.C.; and Elvin McDonald of New York City.

Resource Botanist Beth Anderson and Research Horticulturist Elinor Crank will present papers at the Louisiana Horticultural Society in Lafayette in March. Executive Director Dr. David Northington will lecture at the Wildflowers for Wyoming Conference in Casper in March. Also in March, Elinor will present a paper on her work with the endangered ashy dogweed (*Thymophylla tephroleuca*) at the Southwest Rare and Endangered Plant Conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Spring sightseers in Texas will be guided to the best roadside wildflowers by the Center's annual Wildflower Hotline. Wildflower seekers should call (512) 370-0000, then after a short message, punch 9500. The hotline will operate from March 23 to May 31.

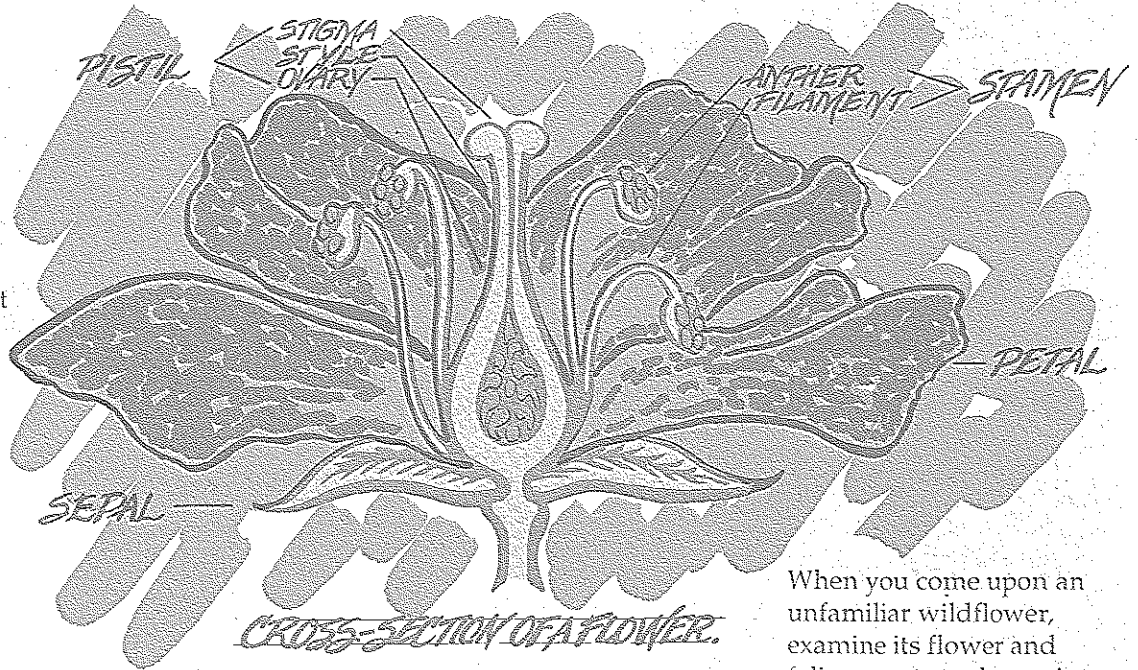
Planning already is underway for the Wildflower Center's 10th birthday celebration in October. Included will be a fundraising party at the LBJ Ranch. For more details, please contact the Development Dept.

# Knowing the family...

One of the most exciting feelings for a wildflower enthusiast is to come upon an unfamiliar wildflower. You quickly pull out your handy wildflower identification book, find the flower in question, and with great satisfaction call it by name. Learning to identify wildflowers is like meeting new friends.

Wildflower identification books are organized in a variety of ways. Most have photographs and a brief description; some are arranged by flower color, others are arranged by family. When just learning how to identify wildflowers, color-coded books can be helpful. But you will soon find yourself thumbing through pages of a color section only to discover that the book is calling lavender what you thought was pink.

A more technical method of identification is to learn plant families. Plants are categorized into groups sharing similar characteristics. The most general group is the family, moving to the more specific genus and species. Family names usually end in the letters "aceae." Genus and species names are always written in italics or underlined. The first letter of the genus name is capitalized and the species is lower case. The common sunflower, for example, is in the family Asteraceae, the genus *Helianthus*, and the species *annuus*.



You need to learn the parts of the plants before learning the plant families. Once you have learned basic plant parts such as

petals, sepals, stamens, and pistils, you are ready to put them together to identify

some common plant families.

Families often are categorized by the number and organization of plant parts. The flower parts in most plant families occur in multiples of five, such as five petals and ten stamens. But a few families like the Onagraceae, or evening primrose family, are characterized by flower parts in multiples of four: four petals, eight stamens, and a four-lobed or pointed stigma.

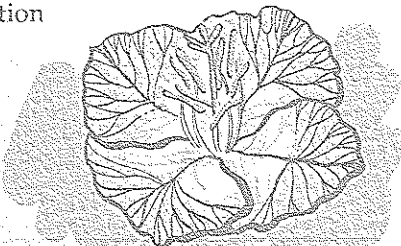
The Lamiaceae, or mint family, has flower parts in multiples of five, but this is not immediately obvious. The top two petals are fused together so they look like a single petal and the three lower petals also are fused together, forming a lower "lip." This bilabiate (two-lipped) flower, a square stem, and aromatic foliage are key characteristics of members of the mint family.

Many plant families have distinguishing characteristics that are easily recognizable once you learn them.

When you come upon an unfamiliar wildflower, examine its flower and foliage parts to determine the plant family.

Knowing the family gives you a starting point — and a better chance of learning the name of your new-found wildflower friend.

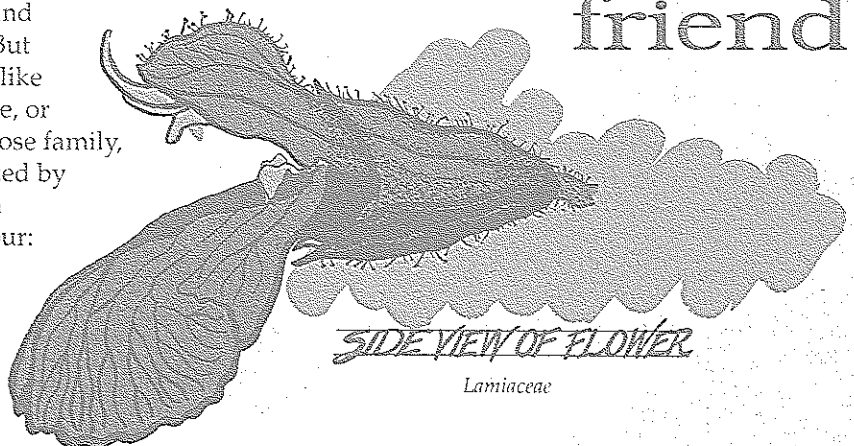
*Elinor Crank*  
Research Horticulturist  
National Wildflower



*Onagraceae*

to identify

...helps  
make  
wildflower  
friends



*Lamiaceae*

## FROM THE FIELD

Native Plants at the Heart of the Garden, *March 7, Washington, DC.*  
Contact: U.S. National Arboretum, 3501 New York Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 475-4857.

Wildflower Walks, *weekends from March 7 to May 31, Claremont, CA.*  
Contact: Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 North College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711-3157, (714) 625-8767.

Wildflowers and the Natural Landscape, *March 19-21, Casper, WY.*  
Contact: Wildflowers for Wyoming, 125 College Dr., Casper, WY 82601.

Wildflower Association of Michigan Annual Spring Conference, *March 23-24, Lansing, MI.* Contact: WAM, 6011 W. St. Joseph, Suite 403, P.O. Box 80527, Lansing, MI 48908-0527.

Tennessee Native Plant Society Annual Meeting, *March 27-29, Center Hill Lake, TN.* Contact: TNPS, P.O. Box 856, Sewanee, TN 37375.

DeWitt County Lanes and Byways Wildflower Celebration, *April 1-30, Cuero, TX.* Contact: DeWitt County Wildflower Assoc., P.O. Box 510, Cuero, TX 77954, (512) 275-5622.

Highland Lakes Wildflower Show, *April 4-5, Lake Buchanan, TX.*  
Contact: Harold Steadman, (512) 793-6211.

North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society Spring Meeting, *April 24-26, Fontana Village, NC.*  
Contact: NCWFPS, Totten Garden Center 3375, UNC, North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375.

Sixth Annual Spring Affair 1992, *April 25, State Fair Park, Lincoln, NE.*  
Contact: UNL Landscape Services, 1340 N. 17th, Lincoln, NE 68588-0609, (402) 472-2679.

Horticulturally Significant Plant Groups of California, *April 30-May 2, Claremont, CA.* Contact: Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden, 1500 N. College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711-3157, (714) 625-8767.

## WILDFLOWER OUTLOOK

Forty-eight conservation organizations in New England have united to save the genetic diversity of the region's rarest plants, according to the New England Wild Flower Society newsletter.

The New England region has more than 500 endangered plant species, the newsletter reports.

The regional program, which is known as the New England Plant Conservation Program (NEPCoP), focuses on plants that are endangered on a statewide level and encourages cooperation between conservation and government officials.

The program is funded through grants from the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust and the Stratford Foundation.

*Kelsey*, the newsletter of the Montana Native Plant Society, reports that the book *Sensitive, Threatened, and Endangered Plants of Montana*, which updates the 1984 book *Vascular Plants of Limited Distribution of Montana*, is now available.

Copies of the 88-page, softcover book are \$5 postpaid from the Montana Natural Heritage Program, State Library, 1515 E. 6th Ave., Helena, Mont. 59620.

The U.S. Forest Service is investigating the theft of an entire population of Mead's milkweed from the Shawnee

National Forest in Illinois last June, according to the *Seed Industry Journal*.

Wild plants, plus young plants introduced as part of a cooperative reintroduction effort, were taken in the theft. The journal reports that the theft may seriously hinder efforts to save the endangered plant.

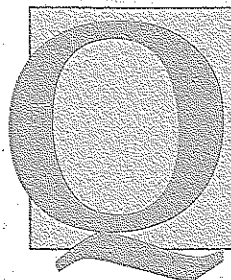
Officials with the Shawnee National Forest are offering a \$5,000 reward for information on the theft.

Members of the Save the Prairie Society in Westchester, Ill., are raising money to buy land that would act as a development buffer for the Wolf Road Prairie in Westchester.

According to the group, the 80-acre prairie, composed of black soil prairie, bur oak savanna, and marshland, is the largest black soil prairie remaining in Illinois.

For more information, write to the group at: 10327 Elizabeth, Westchester, Ill. 60154.

*Know of a special project or newsworthy event in your area that would interest our members? Please send news clippings or releases about the project to the Newsletter Editor at the address listed on the back page. When sending a news clipping, please include the name of the publication and the date it appeared.*



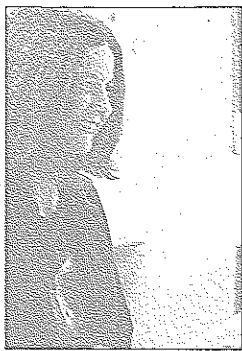
Questions, questions, questions! *The Clearinghouse at the National Wildflower Research Center answers thousands of questions each year on wildflowers and native plants and how to grow them. Clearinghouse Q & A features some of those questions and the botanists' answers.*

**Q:** ... The shrub I recently purchased was sold to me as "Texas mountain laurel." It's not the plant I

knew as mountain laurel in Pennsylvania. Can you identify it?  
—Anonymous, Texas

**A:** You aren't the first to be confused by common names. *Kalmia latifolia*, a member of the heath family, is the mountain laurel of the eastern deciduous forests. *Sophora secundiflora*, a legume, is the mountain laurel of Texas. Both are evergreen shrubs that grow 10 to 15 feet tall and bloom in the spring. Perhaps that is why early settlers to Texas chose to name the "mescal bean" after their much loved shrub of the East.





## Wildflower Center welcomes new botanist

Noreen Damude has joined the Wildflower Center research staff as the resource botanist in charge of the Clearinghouse database.

Noreen will coordinate expansion of the database to include native species information such as site and soil preferences, cultivation techniques, commercial availability, wild-life values, maintenance requirements, and other horticultural remarks.

Information in the database is used in the *Wildflower Handbook*, in state fact sheets, and in other publications. Keeping the information

current is quite a task.

"There's a tremendous amount of material, and it all needs to be kept up-to-date," Noreen says.

Noreen, who holds bachelor's degrees in Art History and French from the University of Pittsburgh and a Masters degree in Biological Sciences from the University of Texas at Austin, joined the Wildflower Center after stints as an environmental consultant and an endangered species biologist with the Texas Natural Heritage Program.

While with the Natural Heritage program, Noreen wrote federal status reports on endangered and threatened plant species.

Noreen also has worked as a French interpreter, and is an avid bird watcher. She has traveled extensively in search of birds and plants.

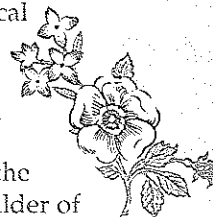
Noreen replaces Annie Paulson Gillespie, who left the Center to devote more time to her family.

## New china pattern to benefit the Wildflower Center

Fitz and Floyd, the American-based designer of fine china and hand-painted ceramic giftware, has announced the debut of its new "American Wildflowers" fine china collection. The pattern, produced in partnership with the Wildflower Center, will be available in early summer. Part of the proceeds from sales will benefit the Wildflower Center.

"We are proud to make a contribution to the future welfare of our precious environment through our association with the Center," says Kenneth R. Marvel, chairman and chief executive officer of Fitz and Floyd.

Designers at Fitz and Floyd worked with Wildflower Center staff members to achieve the pattern's botanical precision. A colorful garland of six native American wildflowers adorns the pale cream shoulder of the pattern.



"We are delighted by the combination of accuracy and beauty depicted on the Fitz and Floyd American Wildflowers china," says David K. Northington, executive director of the Center. "The company's contribution will help enable the Wildflower Center continue its research and public education on this critical component of our country's ecological stability."

The collection will be available in five-piece place settings or open stock. Mugs and rim soup bowls also will be available as open stock items. The collection may be purchased through the Wildflower Center's products division (advance orders are being taken now) or from Fitz and Floyd agents across the country. For further information, please see the enclosed gift brochure or contact the products division.

### SPECIAL *Wildflower* PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

Last March, the National Wildflower Center and the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Ariz., co-sponsored the conference "Landscaping with Wildflowers and Native Plants."

The 24 papers presented at the conference have been collected into a special edition of the *Wildflower Journal*. Copies of the proceedings can be obtained — as supplies last — for \$8 per copy, including shipping and handling. Texas residents should include \$0.31 for sales tax.

Please send requests and checks (made out to NWRC) to the address listed on the back page, attention: Proceedings.

# The Native Beauty of America Photo Contest

SPONSORED BY THE  
NATIONAL WILDFLOWER RESEARCH CENTER

Winners of this exciting new photo contest will collect prize money—plus the First Place photo in each category will be featured in the Wildflower Center's traveling exhibit. Enter now!

## PHOTO CONTEST RULES:

- 1 The photo contest has two categories: (1) Home or Commercial Native Plant Landscapes, and (2) Wildflower Vistas.
- 2 Slides must predominantly feature native plants, and the predominant plants in the photos must be identified.
- 3 Photos will be judged on technical quality (sharpness, correct exposure), composition, originality, and relevance to the "Native Beauty" theme. Photos will be judged by Wildflower Center staff members and a panel of judges. The decisions of the Wildflower Center and judges are final.
- 4 Entries must be submitted on duplicate 35 mm slides or duplicate slides from 35 mm prints. All entries must be postmarked no later than June 15, 1992.
- 5 Contestants may enter as many times as they wish, but must pay an entry fee for each entry submitted. Entry fee for current members is \$10; entry fee for non-members is \$15.
- 6 Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third places in both categories. First Prize winners will receive \$250, Second Prize winners will receive \$150, and Third Prize winners will receive \$75. Winners will be notified by mail. To qualify to receive a prize, winners must sign an affidavit of eligibility and release. Employees and families of the National Wildflower Research Center and its judges are not eligible to enter.
- 7 All slides become the property of the National Wildflower Research Center, which may use the slides in its publications, educational programs, publicity efforts, and slide library. Contestants must know the names and addresses of any identifiable persons featured in the slides, who must also sign an affidavit of release without compensation. No slides will be returned. The National Wildflower Research Center cannot be responsible for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, or postage-due mail.
- 8 Mail your 35mm slide submission(s), fully completed entry blank, and a check or money order for the total entry fee (made payable to the National Wildflower Research Center) to: The Native Beauty of America Photo Contest, National Wildflower Research Center, 2600 FM 973 North, Austin, TX 78725-4201.

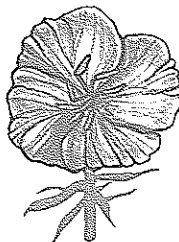
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NUMBER OF ENTRIES SUBMITTED: _____	TOTAL ENTRY FEE: _____

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## Wildflowers Work!

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