Happy Birthday to us!

It's hard to believe that 10 years have passed since the birth of the National Wildflower Research Center. Time flies when you're having fun!

Although there have been many changes through the years, we have had one constant, driving force — our commitment to preserving and reestablishing the regional native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees of this continent. Our approach to this mission continues to evolve.

Mrs. Johnson is the heart and soul of the Wildflower Center's purpose for being: to encourage a legacy of natural beauty and ecological stability. Her lifelong commitment to conserving our natural heritage of wild lands and to aesthetically enhancing America constantly guide us.

During our early years, we worked to acquaint a huge audience with wild-flowers, and they became a part of everyday life. Many new products bear images of wildflowers; tourism, advertising, educational programs, and other disciplines have emphasized wildflowers. Articles about us in publications such as Reader's Digest, Smithsonian, and National Geographic made friends for the Center by describing Lady Bird Johnson's environmental vision.

Once the general public was aware of wildflowers, we shifted our emphasis to explaining why using native plants in planned landscapes is so important. Through our publications, research efforts, educational programs, and regional and national conferences, we provided "how-to" information and successful examples that encouraged people to use native plants in their own landscapes.

While we were pushing the ecologic, economic, and aesthetic reasons for using native plants in planned land-

scapes, concern about a broad spectrum of environmental problems was growing rapidly. Most of those environmental problems find their possible solution in native flora, because it provides oxygen, energy, soil stability, and wildlife habitat without fertilizers or additional water input. But without ecological stability, many of the environmental repair efforts being planned will be ineffective.

Fortunately, people are beginning to understand that it's time to take action to save the environment — and the Wildflower Center is ready, in its next decade, to lead this movement. The emerging land ethic embraces using native plants in landscapes. We must continue to tell people about the steps they can take to heal the environment where they live.

Our planned new facility will provide a unique national education center. We'll have enhanced natural areas and educational displays, and grounds displays that will show native plants used in formal and naturalistic design. Our new home will make it possible for us to sponsor regional and national workshops, seminars, conferences, and short courses — and to bring people together to solve many of the environmental problems we face.

We have accomplished so much during the past ten years and have set the groundwork for the future. But we need your help to make it all happen. Please stay with us as we continue with this important work of healing the environment to provide a legacy of natural beauty and ecological stability for future generations.

Happy Tenth Anniversary to us all!

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

Inside: a look back at our first decade

Ten years.

120 months; 3,653 days; 87,672 hours. Depending on your perspective, it's either a long or incredibly short time.

The Wildflower Center has accomplished so much during the past 10 years; we've included just a sampling of those feats in this special issue.

Peggy Budd, volunteer coordinator and greeter extraordinaire, reminisces about all the visitors who've streamed through our doors—even when we didn't expect them! (Page 7.)

And on page 3, Peggy talks about our wonderful volunteers. We really couldn't have a Wildflower Center without their valuable help.

Our botanists have performed some significant research over the years, increasing knowledge about North American wildflowers and native plants. (Page 6.)

The grounds displays literally grew out of our research projects. Many of the plants grown in greenhouse experiments were planted on the grounds, bringing pleasure to our visitors. Marcia Hermann's report—and a beautiful timeline—is found on pages 4 and 5.

Thanks for the past 10 years — please stay with us for the next 100!

Membership Open House!

It's our birthday party — and we can't celebrate without you! Please join us on Thursday, October 1, from 4 to 7 p.m. for cake and ice cream. Watch for your invitation in the mail!

Many friends have congratulated the Wildflower Center on reaching its tenth birthday. We want to share just-two-of the special greetings we have received.

"For almost thirty years, it has been my good fortune to work with Lady Bird Johnson on the fortune to work with Lady Bird Johnson on the conservation of our country's natural resources, conservation of our country's natural resources, conservation of our country's natural resources, the first much admired beautification beginning with her much admired beautification beginning with her much admired beautification work as served as fellow program of the 1960s. We have served as fellow program of the 1960s. We have served as fellow program of the American Conservation Association, and the National Wildflower Research Center. I am proud to be a Founding Trustee of the Center, and proud to be a Founding Trustee of the Center, and I salute Lady Bird Johnson for her good and I salute Lady Bird Johnson for her good and timeless conservation work.

timeless conservation work.

Under her devoted and inspired leadership, the Under her devoted and inspired leadership, the Center has become one of the nation's principal center has become one of the nation's principal tenter of landscape enhancement through the exponents of landscape enhancement through the exponents of landscape enhancement through the exponents of wildflowers. It has also addressed itself use of wildflowers of endangered species of to the preservation of endangered species of to the preservation of endangered species of wildflowers, among other projects.

wildflowers, among center product wenture was Lady Bird's Wildflower Center venture was well-timed, for the superbly balanced and everwell-timed, for the superbly balanced and ever renewing processes of our natural world are under severe stress — so much so that the health of severe stress — so much so that the health of severe stress — so much so that the health of severe stress — so much so that the health of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro attests to The Earth Summit in R

Our legacy of wildflowers is one of idead most generous gifts. In the second decade of its existence, the Center is given the opportunity to provide increasingly needed leadership for the provide increasingly needed leadership for the healing of the Earth and the enhancement of its healing of the Earth and the challenge."

beauty. I know it will meet the challenge."

Laurance S. Rockefeller

Honorary Trustee, National Wildflower Research Center

"To see black-eyed Susans is to remind myself that I share undimmed beauty with my as we've stood on Uncle John's an unexpected spot in an urban our scribe the keeper of a helen Walutes

Acting Executive Director

Indiamed Susans is to susans is to grandment in share the same as we've stood on Uncle John's an unexpected spot in an urban our scribe the keeper of a solution of the keeper of a scring Executive Director

American Horticultural Society

Wildflower

Founder: Lady Bird Johnson

Executive Director: David K.

Northington, Ph.D.

Editor: Tela Goodwin Mange

Graphic Designer: Elaine Walker

Copy Editors: Jim Hankins, Dyanne Cortez

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Don't miss the Ranch Party!

You may remember our first fundraising gala back in 1984. Held at the LBJ Ranch in Stonewall, Texas, on the banks of the Pedernales River, it was a huge success. Now, eight years later, we return to that same splendid setting to celebrate the Wildflower Center's Tenth Anniversary.

The "Bloomin' Anniversary Celebration" will be held Saturday, Oct. 3. The "country casual" event will run from 4 p.m. until sunset on the grounds of the LBJ Ranch. Tickets to the event are \$200 and \$500 per person; tables for 10 and various underwriting opportunities are available.

The food, catered by Dani of Dallas, promises to be a sumptuous

sampling of regional Texas cuisine ranging from Tex-Mex to German and barbecue to country cookin'.

Gary P. Nunn, whose trademark song "Home with the Armadillo" is the theme song of the PBS television country music show *Austin City Limits*, will provide entertainment.

Event co-chairs are Charlotte Strange of Houston and Milly Holmes of Austin. The 20-member committee has been working on this event since late 1991.

If you want to attend this special celebration, please mail your check, payable to NWRC, to: Rita Kreisle, c/o NWRC, 2600 973 N, Austin TX 78725-4201.

Please respond by Sept. 23. Space is limited!

From the library to the Clearinghouse and the gift shop, volunteers make wildflowers work!

Volunteers, bless them, make the Wildflower Center hum!

Since 1982, folks from around Austin have stepped forward to help with the Center's needs. In the early 1980s, the Junior League of Austin voted to give \$25,000 over three years to cover the volunteer coordinator's salary, and to send a group of eager volunteers. Those ladies, along with a handful of community folks, were the nucleus of the excellent volunteer group in place today.

Under the superb guidance of volunteer coordinator Caroline Howard, volunteers were put to work creating the basis for an outstanding botanical library and slide collection, answering mail, and — wonder of wonders — tending to the hundreds of visitors who dropped in. (Did you know the Wildflower Center never intended to be a popular place for visiting, but simply evolved into one as the demand arose? Please see page 7.)

Where are we now?

Today, after growing steadily for almost 10 years, our volunteer force is composed of 185 dedicated, educated, committed, and pleasant people who will donate more than 6,000 hours this year.

We have volunteers who are:

- full-time schoolteachers who come to us in the summer to work with kids;
- business and professional people giving up precious weekend time to greet visitors, work at information booths, or present slide shows;
- college and high school students wanting to learn more about wildflowers and native plants as well as the experience of volunteering;
- * single adults who love to be part of our festivals, where they can work in groups with other adults;
- * housewives and househusbands who want to learn more about wildflowers for their own yards and then find real fun and fellowship doing good works at the Wildflower Center
- older adults who aren't ready to slow down! Our retired volunteers

do data entry, slide library and archival work, open mail and respond to myriad requests, weed flower beds in high temperatures, step on-board buses with 40 passengers — and make everyone feel at home.

Where are we going?

Nowhere but up!

With the Wildflower Center's expected growth and expansion, the volunteer corps must also grow in

size and knowledge. We must continue to plan carefully to ensure the thorough orientation and training of our volunteers, because their time is precious.

We are dedicated to raising an already high standard of volunteer participation at the Center.

Peggy Budd Volunteer Coordinator National Wildflower Research Center



This volunteer is counting plants in a research plot off the Wildflower Center grounds. Others assist research projects by re-potting plants and counting roots.



This volunteer is leading a group of schoolchildren on a tour of the Wildflower Center. Volunteers conduct special tours of the facility for large groups.

Wildflower Center's landscape tells

As the National Wildflower Research Center has grown in scope and ideals, so have the gardens and research plots grown to reflect our mission of saving and replanting our native flora.

Lady Bird Johnson donated sixty acres of a 150-acre tract of land along the Hornsby Bend of the Colorado River in December 1982. The land, which had been farmland since about 1832, was being used at the time for radio towers and a bermudagrass hayfield.

Although the radio towers still are on the land, since 1982 researchers and volunteers have interplanted the hayfield with wildflowers and planted other areas with native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees.

In 1983, wildflower test plots at the entrance and along the driveway, planted by the Center's first researchers, Kathryn Kennedy and Pam Jones, enticed visitors to the Center. These early test plots reappear in good rainfall years despite heavy competition from the bermudagrass. Also interspersed in the bermudagrass are bluebonnets and Indian paintbrushes, planted by trustee John Thomas in 1984 and 1985, that bloom brilliantly in the early spring.

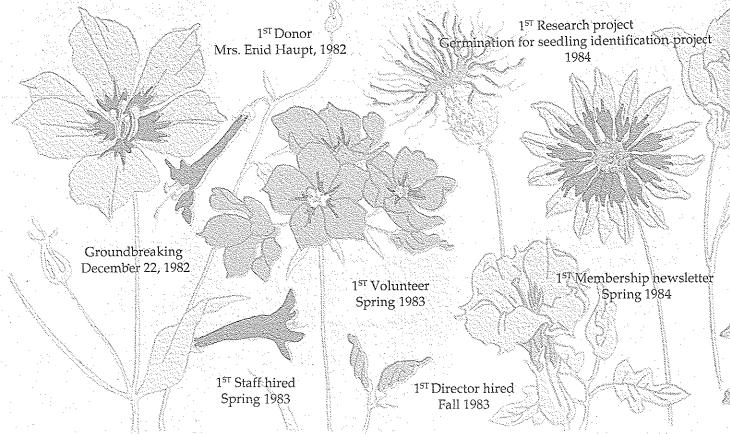
In 1986, starting with a row of Salvia greggii, Pam Jones directed the landscaping of the front of the building. In 1987, she and volunteers planted a "colorscape," using 25 native species that provide color throughout the year. Some Eagle Scouts enthusiastically helped her plant trees on the grounds. The colorscape and gardens were dedicated to Pam after she died tragically in a 1988 motorcycle-pedestrian accident.

By 1988 the research group consisted of research director John Averett, field researcher Katy Kramer-McKinney, research horticulturist Elinor Crank, and resource botanists Annie Paulson-Gillespie and Beth Anderson. Together the group

planned grounds projects to demonstrate the role of native plants in sustainable living with the land, and the blending of natural and planned landscapes. Each botanist contributed her own vision within the overall mission, and John lent thoughtful idealism, guidance, and support.

As a horticulturist, Elinor was concerned with the commercial production of additional native plant species. With volunteer help, she planned and planted a "nativescape" of 40 species of native trees, grasses, and shrubs to celebrate the increased commercial availability of native plants. In a specimen bed outside, favorite wildflowers that Elinor grew in greenhouse germination studies now bloom from spring to fall. These specimen beds showcase also flowers that could be commercially produced.

The research group began designing research projects and demonstration projects that studied the relationships of native plants to other plants



BLUEBELL . SKY ROCKET . SMOOTH PHLOX . THISTLE . JIMSON WEED . INDIRN BLANKET . SPIPER WORT . BEACH EVEN

the history of a growing mission

and animals.

Annie designed a pollination garden to attract bees, butterflies, and other pollinators and to draw attention to animal-plant relationships. This project inspired a successful pollination gardening seminar organized by the research staff.

Katy planned a prairie display to emphasize the importance of plant communities. In 1989, she and a group of staff members and volunteers rescued more than 125 species of grasses and wildflowers from a relict prairie north of Austin that was scheduled for development, to plant in this reconstructed prairie plot.

Alison Hill, a community ecologist, joined the Wildflower Center in 1990 and started a project with the goal of creating a native grassland pasture using grazing as a management tool. Alison's interest in grasses led to an expanded grass display area where visitors can immerse themselves in tall prairie grasses or walk

on carpets of buffalograss.

The research group could not have realized these projects without help — volunteers and the entire Wildflower Center staff rolled up their sleeves and helped with many plantings. Volunteers continue to help maintain and lead tours of these areas to illustrate our mission and vision.

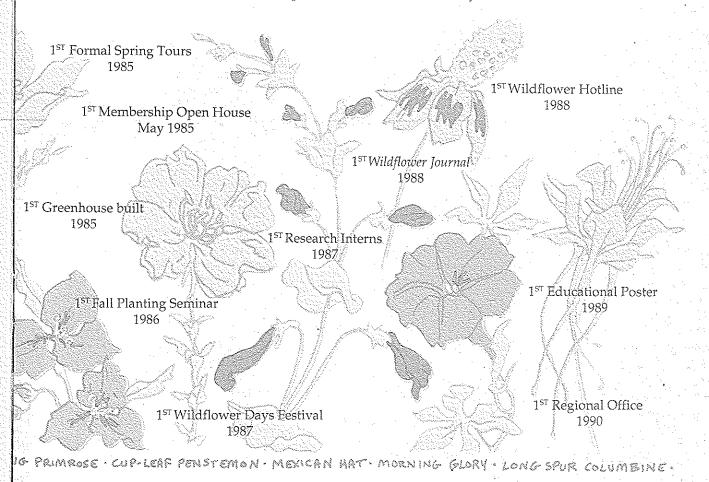
The 1992 project at the Center is a walking trail that winds through the trees growing along the banks of the Colorado River. Some of the older trees may represent the last of the vegetation that was here before European settlers ploughed, planted, and fenced the land. They remind us that this land had a long history before the Wildflower Center began.

The Native American groups living around the area before European settlers arrived probably depended on the dense woodland floodplain near open grassland and made their living from the wildlife and edible plants. In 1832, Ruben Hornsby

claimed the land that would later become the Wildflower Center's home. Settlers planted the rich, sandy-clay soil of the floodplain with corn and cotton crops from the 1800s to the early 1900s. Onions were planted in the 1950s, bermudagrass hay was planted later, and at times cattle grazed parts of the tract.

Now wildflowers, native grasses, trees, and shrubs have been replanted to express the dream of the Wildflower Center. We can never bring back the richness that was once here, but we have brought back a little of the Texas treasure of native plants.

Marcia Hermann Research Assistant National Wildflower Research Center



RESEARCH: new questions keep sprouting up!

Research always raises more questions than it answers. The earliest research plots at the Wildflower Center were established in late 1983 by Kathryn Kennedy and Richard Hilsenbeck to study commercial wildflower seed mixes and wildflower establishment techniques in settings varying from lawns to roadsides. The continuation of those studies, along with seeding-date trials initiated by Katy Kramer McKinney, led to Center botanists growing and photographing more than 200 native species at different growth stages. The specimens were pressed and dried and are stored in our herbarium.

Soil microorganisms

In 1987 and 1989, under the direction of research director John Averett, Wildflower Center botanists initiated studies of of mycorrhizal fungi inoculations on various species, and on a nitrogen-fixing bacterium called *Rhizobium*.

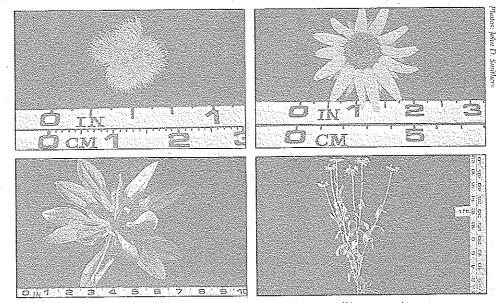
Results from the *Rhizobium* study indicated that planting lupines, a member of the legume family, with *Rhizobium* produces bigger plants with more blooms than plants that received no *Rhizobium* or that received no fertilizer.

The botanists studied the relationship between native species and mycorrhi-zae because some 90 percent of all plant root systems in nature have associations with mycorrhizal fungi, which increase the plant's absorption of water and nutrients and may increase the growth rate and general plant vigor of nursery-grown plants, while using less fertilizer.

Knowing more about *Rhizobium* and mycorrhizal relationships will increase success in growing individual species and reestablishing these plants into natural communities.

Germination

Wildflower Center researchers have studied the germination requirements of more than 100 North American species to find out how well seeds from wild plants can be grown and containerized for eventual transplanting. Twenty species were plant-



These photographs help botanists and others identify wildflower seedlings at various stages:

ed in a row crop project to determine their suitability for commercial seed production. One of the most important of these species is Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja indivisa*), which needs a host plant for successful growth.

Many native species are not yet available commercially, but would be excellent plants for home and commercial landscapes. With more information on propagating and establishing these native species, the nursery industry can, in a cost-effective way, develop additional native species for sale, increasing the options available for gardening, landscaping, or plant community reestablishment.

Endangered species

Elinor Crank, research horticulturist at the Center, studied two endangered species — Thymophylla tephroleuca (ashy dogweed) and Salvia penstemonoides (big red sage). Both were successfully germinated and grown to flowering. Elinor discovered that dogweed seeds need a heat pretreatment for best results. The results could apply to reestablishing other species in similar climates.

Information

Over the years, Wildflower Center botanists Annie Paulson Gillespie, Beth Anderson, Bonnie Harper-Lore, Maria Urice, and Noreen Damude have compiled a large native plant database, including information on plants, seed sources, and landscaping professionals. That information was used in the first and second editions of the *Wildflower Handbook*. Noreen and Flo Oxley are continuing that work. On average, the botanists, with assistance from volunteers, answer more than 7,000 information requests per year.

Land management

To reestablish entire ecosystems, our botanists have had to do more than germinate and transplant — they've had to devise land management systems for the long-term establishment of maximum biodiversity and community structure.

Marcia Hermann studied the restoration of an entire native plant community at a Travis County, Texas, park. To learn more about the ecological processes involved in rehabilitating land, she compared management options at the site to determine which ones will produce a favorable shift in species composition.

Alison Hill, former community ecologist with the Wildflower Center, used grazing, mowing, and fire as management tools for prairie reestablishment efforts at the Center. What has been learned through these and other studies can provide guidance for many millions of acres of land in North America, from roadside rights of way to agricultural and pasture land needing revegetation.

If you build it, they will come...and they did!

Can you imagine a more unique and intriguing place to visit than the National Wildflower Research Center in its early days?

The public was captivated!
Folks around Austin loved
their wildflowers, and now here
was the chance to go out and see
them all in one place! Once the
front gate opened, visitors
strolled, wandered, marched,
biked, drove, and even walked in
with great regularity, particularly in
the spring.

But the staff hadn't really anticipated this pent-up demand to see wildflowers.

During the Wildflower Center's first year or two, field botanists and mail-room folks continually were surprised (although pleasantly) by the number of people who wanted to look at the pretty flowers!

We had to develop a game-plan to deal with these visitors, because they obviously were going to keep coming. So a group of Junior League volunteers, community volunteers, and staff quickly organized to act as tour guides.

On Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, we greeted visitors at the front door and personally escorted them out to the demonstration plots — quite a hike, as the early plots were located about 3/4 of a mile from the building. But hike we did, stopping to identify the flowers along the way and speaking with great authority, although we volunteer tour guides were still learning about the plots.

Oh, the walking!

Going into the glass greenhouse was a high point of the tour as well. (We still took folks in the greenhouses back then.) We would lecture on the virtues of the drip and ooze irrigation systems, shouting above the noise of the cooling system. Now visitors stand outside the greenhouse looking in, so they don't disturb the research.

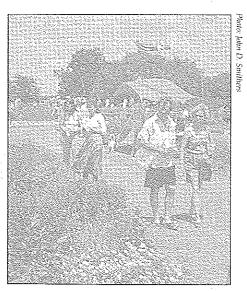
Back in our infancy, the botanists also led tours, which was great training for the docents. We docents listened closely, trying to memorize the plants and bits of information



Many schoolchildren visit the Wildflower Center — and sometimes even work in the research plots!

about them! Former building and grounds manager Wendy Wood worked so hard, hauling ice water and paper cups out to the fields for our guests. After escorting our visitors around the grounds, we invited them back into the lobby, hoping to sell them a T-shirt. (That's the only product we had at the time — one style of T-shirt, one design!)

But things evolved, luckily, and with each spring we got a little wiser about Spring Tours. In fact, we got so organized we began producing a lovely "Spring Tours Brochure" listing visitation dates and times. Folks would call ahead to arrange for large groups, and visitors to Austin's



Visitors enjoying one of the Wildflower Center's yearly festivals on the grounds.

hotels and motels found our tour brochures readily available, which helped attract more visitors. A staff member scheduled tours and arranged for volunteers to meet the dropins. And our hours expanded to Monday through Friday!

The next step came in 1989, when someone got the brilliant idea to do a "Guide to the Grounds" so our guests could

walk the grounds at their leisure, enjoying the clearly labeled plants and beds at their own pace.

"Tour guides," as we knew them, were no longer standing ready to greet, but were saved for large groups. Botanists were "on call" to come up front to answer questions, inspect wilted plants in plastic bags, and try to identify someone's beloved wildflower through an oral description — no simple task!

It's 1992 and still we evolve. We notice now that people no longer come only in the spring but rather year 'round! People are more knowledgeable than in the early days... and much more aware of the environment. People of all ages seem to have a true interest in wildflowers and native plants, a real thirst for knowledge.

It's been fun, to say the very least. The nicest people drop in to visit us. We've had the honor of meeting folks from California to Costa Rica, Germany to Japan.

We estimate that 100,000 guests have visited the Wildflower Center since 1983. More than 3,000 school children have been presented with special programs; many groups have participated in plantings and seed gatherings; and visitors, both members and non-members alike, have had their questions answered whenever possible.

We didn't expect visitors, but they came — and we're glad!

Peggy Budd Volunteer Coordinator National Wildflower Research Center

Kansas Wildflower Society, Sept. 11-13, Burr Oak, MO. Contact: KWS, Mulvane Art Center, 17th and Jewell, Washburn U., Topeka, KS 66621.

Virginia Native Plant Society, Sept. 11-13, Roanoke, VA. Contact: P.O. Box 844, Annandale, VA 22003.

17th Home Gardeners' School, Sept. 12, New Brunswick, NJ. Contact: Ofc. of Cont. Prof. Ed., Rutgers U., P.O. Box 231, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, (908) 932-9271.

International Wetlands Conference, Sept. 14-18, Columbus, OH. Contact: William J. Mitsch, School of Natural Resources, Ohio State U., Columbus, OH 43210.

-Preserving Our Native Heritage, Sept. 25-26, Lubbock, TX. Sponsored by Texas Tech U. Contact: Dept. of Agronomy, Texas Tech, Lubbock, TX 79409-2122, (806) 742-2837.

Arkansas Native Plant Society, Sept. 25-27, Forrest City, AR. Contact: Lois Wilson, ANPS, P.O. Box 186, Joiner, AR 72350.

California Exotic Pest Plant Symposium, Oct. 9-10, Morro Bay, CA. Contact: George Molnar, 801 Spring Dr., Mill Valley, CA 94941.

Gardening as if the World Depended on It, Oct. 10, Columbus, OH. Speech by Roger Swain, "Victory Garden" host, during AmeriFlora. Contact: Sherran Blair, First. Community Bank of Ohio, P.O. Box 717, Columbus, OH 43216, (614) 239-4680.

Native Plant Society of Texas, Oct. 23-25, Nacogdoches, TX. Contact: P.O. Box 891, Georgetown, TX 78627, (512) 863-9685.

Landscaping with Native Plants, Oct. 24, Sarasota, FL. Co-hosted by Florida Native Plant Society's Serenoa Chapter, Sarasota County Cooperative Extension, and the Selby Botanical Gardens. Contact: Cooperative Extension, (813) 951-4240.

The Drought: Effect on Native Plants, Oct. 24, Fullerton, CA. Contact: Southern California Botanists Drought Symposium, Dept. of Biology, California State U., Fullerton, CA 92634.

Gardens for Arizona Living, Oct. 24-25, Scottsdale, AZ. Desert-gardening show at SHEA 7000 mall. Contact: (602) 569-0728.

Rediscovering America: Natural Areas in the 1990s, Oct. 27-30, Bloomington, IN. Natural Areas Conference and Natural Areas Association. Contact: NAC Registration, Div. of Nature Preserves, 402 W. Washington St., Rm. W267, Indianapolis, IN 46204, (317) 232-4052.

Celebrate a decade of progress: Join the National Wildflower Research Center!

Members of the National Wildflower Research Center support wildflower and other native plant work across the nation. Benefits include Wildflower, the newsletter and Wildflower, the journal; 10% discount on unique Center products such as wildflower books, calendars, and T-shirts; advance notice on tours and discounts to Center seminars; free wildflower information from the Center's Clearinghouse; a membership card; and other benefits. \$25 Supporting Member. All benefits listed above. \$50 Sustaining Member. All the above plus a set of specially commissioned wildflower note cards. \$100 Key Member. All the above plus wildflower garden apron and invitations to special events. \$250 Center Sponsor. All the above plus wildflower poster. \$500 Trust Member and \$1,000 Benefactor. All the above plus special privileges. Thank you! Your contribution is partially tax deductible.

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