

# January 2007 Newsletter

## Native Plant Society of Texas - South Texas Chapter



### Jan. 4<sup>th</sup> – Monthly Meeting – Guest Speaker Michael Potter

Our monthly meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. at the Garden Senior Center, 5325 Greely Drive, Corpus Christi.

The guest speaker will be Michael Potter, the new Nueces County Extension Agent – Horticulture. Michael fills the position previously held by Dr. Michael Womack, who is currently with the South Texas Botanical Gardens. Michael Potter will discuss (1) Texas Cooperative Extension missions and its role in communities – in particular how horticulture impacts Texas counties and (2) the unified development code for Corpus Christi landscaping.

Michael is a member of the committee that is re-writing this code. The code will eventually be a blueprint for Corpus Christi landscapes both commercial and residential. The purpose of this code will be to reduce water consumption of Corpus Christi landscapes. Michael is hoping that, in the case of a drought similar to the one in 1996 (not to mention the drought of the fifties), Corpus Christi homeowners will have landscapes more suitable to withstanding a prolonged drought. In connection with Michael's employment, and also in connection with his City of Corpus Christi committee work, Michael hopes to publish a list of plants native to this area by the end of 2007. Michael will talk to our chapter about how we can together help educate and change both public perception and the landscape codes in order to preserve water resources.

### Chapter Updates

#### Renewed Memberships

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Cameron & Rick Pratt of Port Aransas  
Shelly Maher of Bishop

#### Our Next Meeting is February 1<sup>st</sup>

Speaker - T.B.A.

### NPSOT Spam Warning

We received an email that was sent from someone who is spoofing a NPSOT email address. Spoofing is sending email that appears to come from another address other than that of the actual sender. If you received an email from [oxyl@npsot.org](mailto:oxyl@npsot.org) with a subject of "Next Big market Winner", delete it. The two addresses that the state office uses to send email the great majority of the time are [state@npsot.org](mailto:state@npsot.org) and [webmaster@npsot.org](mailto:webmaster@npsot.org). Be suspicious of email from any other address that ends with "@npsot.org".

Michael & Jennifer McBride NPSOT State Office Managers [state@npsot.org](mailto:state@npsot.org) PHONE 830-997-9272

### Planning Ahead in 2007

The date for the 2007 Texas Plant Conservation Conference has been confirmed. The conference will be held at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, September 19-21, 2007. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Flo Oxley, Director of Education and Conservation, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center  
512/292-4200 ext. 160 [oxley@wildflower.org](mailto:oxley@wildflower.org)

### Do You Have INFO???

Do you know of an upcoming book release, workshop, lecture, or information that would be of interest to the local NPSOT members? If so, email the information to Shelly Maher at [shelly\\_maher@hotmail.com](mailto:shelly_maher@hotmail.com). If applicable and space permits, it can be included in our monthly newsletter.

**Upcoming Events at the South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center** (361) 852-2100

[www.cbbotanicalgardens.org](http://www.cbbotanicalgardens.org)

- **WINTER LECTURE SERIES** for Texas winter visitors and area residents. Guest speakers will present unique perspectives on regional environmental, agricultural and horticultural topics from 10 to 11:30 a.m., most Wednesday mornings in December and January, in the Visitors Center.
  - January 10: Easy & Exotic Orchids
  - January 17: Natural Heritage of South Texas
  - January 24: Coastal Bend Agriculture
  - January 31: Wetland Wonderlands

Cost is General Admission only: Adults, \$4; Seniors (65), \$3.50. STBGNC members are free. For reservations or further information, call 361/852-2100

- **Blacklock's Advanced Bird ID Series** with acclaimed birder, naturalist and author Gene Blacklock of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, will be offered beginning Monday, January 15, at the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, 8545 S. Staples Street. The series offers twelve class sessions, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., Mondays; plus six field trips, running through early-May.

Class maximum is 15. Tuition is \$150 for STBGNC members, \$175 non-members (includes one-year STBGNC membership); and ***must be prepaid by January 9***. Fee includes Gardens & Nature Center admissions.

**President's Corner** - written by Ann Hoch

I have been a member of the South Texas Chapter of the NPSOT for many years. However, I became an active member only in the past 18 months. I stand in awe of the wealth of information our small chapter has in its members – not just in their knowledge of South Texas native plants, but also their knowledge in a variety of fields. To those of you who have been active members for many years, I thank you for your many contributions. You have worked together and know of each other's abilities and contributions.

However, I would like our newer members (myself included) also to know of both our past and our members. For that reason, I will present each month a column entitled "Spotlight on a Member" of our local chapter. I have chosen to begin with Shelly D. Maher, our Newsletter Editor. Not only does Shelly prepare the newsletter, she updates our database of members. That database, by the way, was designed, and for a long time, updated by Carolyn Chancellor, our most recent past president. I will select members at random. If you have a suggestion for the next, etc., etc. Spotlight, please let me know.

Shelly became a member of the chapter (and thereby, the state NPSOT) in November of 2002. She has been our newsletter editor since August 2005. In addition she has been a speaker to our chapter, giving presentations on native plants; and she has assisted with workshops and plant sales that have been organized by our chapter.

Shelly tells me that she became interested in nature as a child, while spending time outdoors. She followed that interest in her college degree plan. She graduated from Texas A&M University-Kingsville where she obtained a BS in Agriculture with an emphasis in Horticulture. In connection with that she did research on various plants. Shelly is employed by the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Her worksite is the Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center, Kingsville, Texas, where she does research on South Texas native plants. At work, Shelly has assisted in writing numerous reports, newsletters, and project plans for USDA-NRCS.

For several months, and in connection with research at USDA-NRCS, Shelly has brought plants and/or seeds to chapter meetings. Those seeds and/or plants are given to any person who agrees to write a report on his/her own success (and methods) in growing each particular plant.

Shelly currently continues her education at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, where she is doing graduate work in Biology, studying the reproductive biology of a native lily. Her thesis project is complete, but the written portion of the thesis is currently in process. Shelly's personal goal as related to native plants is to help provide the research needed on native plants so that they can be used to meet vegetative needs.

Thank you, Shelly, for being a part of our chapter.

**“Do You Know Your Natives???”** Contributed by: USDA-NRCS Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center

Canada wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*) is a native, cool season, perennial bunchgrasses which can grow two to three feet in height. It reproduces by tillers and seed. This grass can be found scattered on shaded banks, along fence rows, and in open woodlands throughout most of the U.S. Canada wildrye has good forage value for cattle and horses and fair value for sheep and wildlife in the spring when it is green, but its value decreases sharply as it matures. Canada wildrye has performed well on both coarse and fine textured soils and can be used as a cool-season component in native seed mixtures for range restoration. It also can be used as a cool-season pasture planting, especially for shaded, wooded, riparian areas.



The E. “Kika” De La Garza Plant Materials Center made a commercial seed release of Lavaca Germplasm Canada wildrye in 2000. Lavaca Germplasm was originally collected in Lavaca County near the South Texas town of Hallettsville. Canada wildrye stands perform best in wooded pastures where aggressive warm-season species are not encountered. Do not plant wildrye adjacent to pastures with large concentrations of grasses like KR bluestem or buffelgrass.

Info Sources: The Grasses of Texas - Gould, 1975 and research performed at the PMC

**Calendar**

- Jan 4<sup>th</sup> - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker Michael Potter
- Feb 1<sup>st</sup> - NPSOT Monthly Meeting 7 p.m. – Speaker T.B.A.

**Chapter Contacts**

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**State Web Site** [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org)