

Native Plant Society of Texas State Activity Report

September 1, 2007 - August 31, 2008

Annual State Meeting and Fall Symposium: Partnered with the Native Prairies Association of Texas to host the NPSOT-NPAT 2007 Joint Symposium in Sun City-Georgetown October 18-21. The theme was "The Blackland and Grand Prairies and Grasslands of the Edwards Plateau." The symposium, which was planned and organized by the Williamson County chapter with help from the Austin chapter, had a record attendance of over 350. The silent auction, a regular feature of the fall symposiums, raised \$3601 for the Ann Miller Gonzalez Research Grants for Graduate and Undergraduate Students. Planning has been well underway for the upcoming 2008 Symposium on the Big Thicket, to be headquartered in Beaumont October 16-19.

Spring Symposium: Partnered with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to host a joint Spring Symposium in Austin February 23, 2008. The theme, "Habitat Conservation, Citizen by Citizen," was a review of habitat preservation, plant conservation and invasive species management programs in Texas.

Chapters: NPSOT has 30 chapters. This year we lost one chapter - Bandera County (Medina/Bandera), and gained two new ones - Caddo Wildflower (Linden/Cass County) and Guadalupe County (Schertz/Seguin). The Williamson County chapter was selected as Chapter of the Year for 2007.

Memberships: Total NPSOT memberships as of August 31, 2008 were 1782. Compared to total memberships of 1724 on August 31, 2007, this represents a net gain of 58 for the year. Lifetime memberships grew by four during this period, for a current total of 17.

Kate Hillhouse Scholarship Fund: This fund was established by the state board in April 2008. The fund has received donations of \$4345, which were given in memory of Kate Hillhouse, former NPSOT president (1992-93), who passed away January 3, 2008. Silent auction proceeds will be redirected to this fund starting with the 2008 fall symposium. The Chapter of the Year Award was also renamed to honor Kate.

NPSOT Science Fair Award: This award was added in January 2008 to recognize a high school student(s) and a middle school student(s) for excellence in research related to Texas native plants. The first award winners were chosen at the statewide ExxonMobil Texas Science and Engineering Fair in San Antonio April 11.

NICE! (Natives Instead of Common Exotics): The process to trademark the NICE! logo was initiated by the Boerne chapter in 2006 and successfully completed this year. The NICE! program, which promotes the use of native plants in landscaping, was created by the Boerne chapter and has been adopted by the Fredericksburg, Highland Lakes, North Central Texas and Trinity Forks chapters.

Texas Invasive Plant Conference 2007: NPSOT donated \$1000 to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to help sponsor the Texas Invasive Plant Conference held in Austin November 14-16, 2007.

7th Annual Texas Plant Conservation Conference: NPSOT donated \$1000 to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to help sponsor this conference held in Austin September 19-21, 2007. The conference highlighted the plant conservation work of students from around the state.

8th Annual Texas Plant Conservation Conference: NPSOT donated \$1000 to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to help sponsor this conference, to be held at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi campus September 17-20, 2008. The conference will highlight plant conservation work in South Texas and the Coastal Bend.

Strategic Planning: Contracted with Ed Conroy, Development Consultant, San Antonio, to develop a strategic plan and long-range goals for NPSOT. Two planning sessions have been held and presentation of the final plan to the state board is pending.

Website Redesign: Contracted with Go9Media, a professional website design company in Austin, to redesign the NPSOT website www.npsot.org. (In progress)

Submitted by Carol Feldman, NPSOT President, September 1, 2008