Collin County NPSOT Newsletter

Workday at Heard - Saturday, Apr. 25
We had a pretty good workday at Heard in March, but there’s a lot more that needs to be done before the summer crowds arrive. We begin at 9 am and work until around noon. Come if you can, get Master Naturalist service hours, learn about the Heard plants, and provide a much needed service to our hosts. Along with gloves, you might bring hand and shrub shears.

Our Next Meeting - Tuesday, May. 5
The next meeting topic for the Collin County Chapter of the NPSOT, ‘Photographing Flowers and Plants – and More!’ will be presented by chapter member John Worley. This program offers ideas to improve our photos and insights into why some photos fail – and what to do about it. Whether you are using a cell phone camera, a point and shoot, or a SLR, you will enjoy as well as learn from this presentation.

The meeting will be held in Laughlin Hall at the Heard Museum. Doors open at 7:00. The program starts at 7:15.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Upcoming Meetings and Events
Sat. May 9, 9:30am at 4545 CR 412, McKinney 75071: 11th Annual Stiff Creek Wildflower Walk. Bring a dish to share for brunch at about 11:30-1:00.

Tue. June 2, 6pm: Tour of the Heard Gardens and Meadows. Chapter Members lead members and guests on a tour of the Heard. Visit seldom-seen areas of the Heard grounds. Note the early start time!

Heard Museum Native Plant Sale a Success
This was the first time ever that the Heard sale was so successful that there was practically nothing left to sell by midday on Saturday. And NPSOT sold the rest of our plant stakes and attracted a few new members from the crowd.

Brice Creelman – one of our major growers – donated a fine 15 gallon Rusty Blackhaw Viburnum for a silent auction with the money going to our Chapter.

Brice Creelman
Tony Manasseri oversaw the tree, shrub, and succulent sales

Fundraising Ideas?
Please submit any fundraising ideas that you might have to a board member.

Editor/Secretary Note: If you wish, you can use the email address that the newsletter came from and I’ll forward it to the others.
Should I Get a Polarizer for My Camera?

Reflected and scattered light is partially polarized. Polarized sunglasses are designed to reduce or eliminate polarized, reflected and scattered light. These sunglasses block reflections from pavement to reduce glare.

Blue skylight is created as the white light from the sun is scattered off air molecules in the upper atmosphere. (The sun itself appears yellow once the blue is removed.) The blue light scattering causes the sky to be partially polarized. A polarizer can remove the polarized part of the skylight, darkening the blue of the sky.

- Put on polarized sunglasses and tilt your head 45º to the left and the right, looking around the sky. Notice that the sky brightness changes as you tilt your head.

Max - - Effect - - Min

I’m not suggesting that you hold your sunglasses in front of your camera (although I have). Rather, I’m suggesting you get a polarizer – even if you just have to hold it in front of your camera to use it.

- Notice the big difference between the skies with little difference in the grass in the composite picture.

Polarizer set for minimum effect, with glare and reflection of the sky off the table top.

Polarizer set for maximum effect, reducing the glare, making a clearer image of the ‘still life’.

Polarizer set for minimum effect. The pale sky and glare off the water show little contrast.

Polarizer set for maximum effect, darkening the water and sky while showing the clouds.

(Images taken at the Heard Museum Science and Technology Center from the patio.)

Editor’s Note: This is just one of the subjects we will talk about in the presentation, ‘Photographing Flowers and Plants – and More!’, at the May 5 meeting. Be sure to attend! You won’t want to miss it.
Prairie Hikes

The Fort Worth chapter of the Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT) (https://fortworthnpat.wordpress.com/) introduces 1st Monday prairie hikes. Led by Jeff Quayle, these hikes will visit local prairies in the Metroplex. For all hikes, please wear proper footwear, long pants, and bring along sunscreen and plenty of water. For more information, contact Jeff at 817-729-0283 or squaylei2000@gmail.com

Saturday, May 2 from 8:45am – 2:00pm
Fossil Hill (owned By Jeanne & Wayne Erickson)
Bowie, TX, south of town on Lake Amon Carter

We will meet in Decatur, at the TXDOT rest area about 3 miles to the west of Highway 287 and Loop 380. We leave from there at 9:00am sharp to caravan to the grasslands, so please be there by 8:45am. For those in attendance, a map will be provided with directions from the rest stop to the property on Lake Amon Carter.

There is a limit for this field trip because of limited parking and access. An RSVP is required, with a maximum of 12 in attendance. After you RSVP, email me for a copy of the Fossil Hill site description and a plant list.

An excellent example of a remnant Blackjack/Post Oak woodland, with patches of sandy and gravelly prairie and some riparian areas. Biologically rich with more than 380 plant species.

Monday, May 4 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The May hike will be at Stella Rowan Prairie in SE Fort Worth. Located north of I-20 and south of E. Seminary Dr., and west of Campus Dr. Call or email for where to meet.

Saturday, May 23 from 9:00am – 2:00pm
LBJ National Grasslands (units 45 & 71)
Decatur, TX

We will meet in Decatur, at the TXDOT rest area about 3 miles to the west of Highway 287 and Loop 380. We leave from there at 9:00am sharp to caravan to the grasslands, so please be there by 8:45am.

We will visit several highly diverse habitats within the grasslands, with unusual microhabitats, such as seeps and canyon which support rare plants found in the grasslands. Hopefully, one highlight will be to see Shooting Stars (Primula meadia=Dodecatheon meadia). Other highlights include Maidenhair Fern (Adiantum capillus-veneris), Blue Hyacinth (Camassia scilloides), False Dragon’s Head (Physostegia pulchella), Stickleaf (Mentzelia oligosperma), Rock Sandwort (Minuartia michauxii) and Red Columbine (Aquilegia canadensis).

http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/texas/about-forest/districts/?cid=fswdev3_008440

Saturday, May 30 from 9:00am – 1:00pm
Southwest Nature Preserve (58 acres)
5201 Bowman Springs Road
Arlington, TX 76017

Meet at the park entrance at 8:45am. Hike starts at 9:00am.

We will explore this high quality eastern Cross Timbers Blackjack/Post Oak woodlands with patches of sandy prairie, supporting microhabitats with rare plant communities. Some of the highlights include Glen Rose Yucca (Yucca necopina), Farkle Berry (Vaccinium arboresum), Nuttall’s Wild Indigo (Baptisia nuttalliana), Snout Bean (Rhynchosis latifolia), Goats Rue (Tephrosia virginiana), Prairie Flameflower (Phemeranthus parviflorus=Talinum parviflorum), Southern Wax Myrtle (Morella cerifera=Myrica) and Adder’s Tongue (Ophioglossum engelmannii).

https://naturallyfun.org/southwest-nature-preserve

Monday, June 1 from 6:00pm – 8:00pm

The June hike will be at Marion Sansom Park, at the Lake Worth spillway. The address is 2501 Roberts Cut Off Rd., Fort Worth 76114.
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Prairie Hikes

Our president, Carol Clark, is leading a series nature talks and walks at Oak Point Park and Nature Preserve for the City of Plano. (All walks meet at main parking lot at 5901 Los Rios, and are subject to change or weather related cancellation.) Pre-registration (required) at https://parks.planotx.org/econnect/Activities/Activities AdvSearch.asp.

Walks:
May 5, Tue., Wildflower/Plant Walk, 10 am--$5 fee
May 12, Tue., Nature Walk, 10 am--$5 fee

Talks:
May 16, Sat., “Monarchs and Milkweeds”, 10 am--$5 fee. Program and then a walk to observe butterflies and milkweeds in the park.
June 6, Sat., “Working Birds”, 10 am--$7 fee.
Learn how birds’ beaks, feet, legs and wings are uniquely adapted to different niches in their environments and explore the features that make them just right for their own environmental “jobs”.

Closed-toed shoes and long pants are recommended for all events

Editor’s Notes

I tried to format this newsletter to be easily read directly on your PC, laptop, or tablet. Please send me information and content ideas that you might have. I try to prepare the newsletter for distribution in the middle of the fourth week of the month. If you are reading this on your PC directly, all website and email links are configured to activate if you hold the cursor over the text link and press CTRL and CLICK your mouse button at the same time.

Native Plant Society of Texas – Collin County Chapter