
MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1990

FROM THE EDITOR:

This Fall season has been rather hectic. A volunteer editor must squeeze in spare moments when there is "free" time available. "Free" time during the holidays and short days of winter will soon be over.

This time of year heralds the planning season, i.e. the period of reflection before spring planting begins. Since this will arrive after Christmas, it is likely that you already have received the latest plant catalogs with design ideas for the new year. Let's not forget the "wild" areas or waste places near the end of subdivisions, along fencerows, and marking the edges of gardens, cultivated fields, and water bodies. Children love these places, much to the chagrin of their parents. There is something magical in the "wild" areas that draws children to them. Perhaps because the "wild" areas represent an earlier period, with nature having primary control -- not society, the neighbors, or parents -- where the imagination and the rules for game-playing are governed by nature's dynamic processes.

Genetically, historically, and botanically, some of many "wild" areas are storehouses of our beginnings, and of nature's ancient heritage. In the quest to grow native plant species, consider creating "wild" areas, and preserving the best of the remaining ones for the future. There is always some new plant to be rediscovered, or some new ecological process to be learned from them.

Joyce Roberts, a biology teacher at Bayou View Junior High School, has been heading up a drive to establish a Natural Environmental Laboratory" as a teaching and demonstration tool for school students in the Gulfport area. With advice from Chris Wells and financial support from the Crosby Arboretum, area garden clubs, and county agencies, she and her students are establishing several plant communities on school property: a cypress grove, a blueberry garden, and a pitcher plant bog.

Three areas are set aside for wildflower meadows. The county forester has agreed to burn part of the area as a way to reintroduce natural forces, thereby helping to establish and retain more of the prairie species native to the region's pine savannahs. The school board and county supervisors will provide manpower.

Joyce is seeking funds to buy plants and facilities (a raised wooden footpath, among other amenities). The MNPS will consider funding this and other worthy projects at its next board meeting in April. For more information, contact Chris Wells, or Mrs. Joyce Roberts, Bayou View Jr. High, 212 43rd Street, Gulfport, MS.

WILDFLOWERS FOR MISSISSIPPI MEADOWS

Those uncultivated flowers found growing naturally along roadsides, in meadows and fields, and in forests are called wildflowers. Wildflowers include a wide variety of plant types, including reseeding flowering annuals -- both native and introduced -- and hardy perennials, selected vines and small shrubs, ferns, and even showy native grasses.

Some wildflowers are perfectly useful in formal plantings and gardens where neatness is the norm. However, most are better suited when used in informal, meadow-like masses, or interplanted as companions to other landscape plants. Others make fine accents or are better adapted to difficult growing conditions such as clay soils, hot and dry hills or low, wet areas.

Remember that what is a beautiful wildflower meadow to one gardener may be seen as a weed patch to a neighbor.* The use of human elements, such as fences, benches, or marked paths, adds order to the landscape and may make a difference in neighborhood relations.

Many native plant enthusiasts eschew nonnatives, and consider only native plants to be true wildflowers. However, there are a great many "naturalized" flowering plants that have been introduced or escaped from cultivation.

Regardless of the origin of a plant species, wildflower species offer many advantages in the garden. Their wide range of seasonal color often attracts butterflies and seed-eating birds. Most wildflowers, once established, require little water, fertilizer, and pest control measures. They return, year after year, either as reseeding annuals or as true perennials from bulbs, corms, roots, stems, or rhizomes.

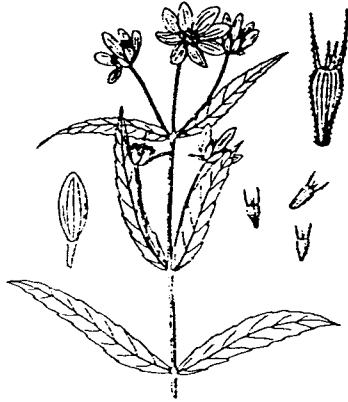
There are no "no maintenance" gardens. Due to their natural abilities to spread, some wildflowers may become rampant invaders that require periodic control. Many weedy, less desirable plants also appear in wildflower gardens and require removal--making even wildflowers at best "low maintenance." Winter mowing of wildflower meadows, annual pruning or controlled burning of faded foliage and dead seed stalks, and careful use of selective herbicides are needed to retain wildflower species in some situations. With these, and other, more routine gardening techniques, many people can enjoy success and enjoyment from the use of wildflowers in the landscape.

Being adapted to the local climate and soils, many wildflowers are well-suited for use in home gardens. With a little planning, they may be incorporated easily in a variety of landscape situations and enjoyed for years.--- FELDER RUSHING and STEVE NEWMAN

* (EDITOR'S NOTE: Ordinances may restrict some meadows. To learn more to promote "naturalistic" landscape ordinances, consult: Gillespie, Annie Paulson. 1990. Home meadow confronting weed ordinances. Journal of the National Wildflower Research Center 3(2): 12-19.)

FALL FLOWER MEMORIES: BIDENS

Late fall and early winter are usually good times to collect a few wildflower seeds from some of the plants that have brightened roadsides and fencerows in the fall. What were those vivid yellow and gold swatches of color in September and October that stick in our memory banks?



Tickseed sunflower, Bidens aristosa, also known as beggar ticks or sticktight, is one such native annual that blooms in early fall. The plant is named for its seeds, or achenes, which are found adhering to clothing after autumn hikes.

(Illustration from Wilkinson, R.E.; Jaques, H.E. 1972. How to know the weeds. Dubuque, IA: W.C. Brown Co. 232 p.)

As a guide for cultivating this showy species, I consulted Phillips' book, Growing and Propagating Wild Flowers. He actually details the cultivation of B. polyopsis, a closely related species replaced largely by B. aristosa throughout Mississippi. As Phillips points out, however, propagation and cultivation requirements for the two species are essentially the same. Anyone interested in growing either species should definitely refer to his excellent book.

I collected my seeds along a rather dry dirt road in Newton County on October 31, 1989. Seeds were not allowed to dry out, but either planted immediately or stored in moist condition in the refrigerator. Some seeds were scattered over a shallowly spaded bed on the same day as collection. The rest of the seeds were stratified in moist peat moss and refrigerated. In the spring (1990), a higher percentage of the seeds that had overwintered out-of-doors seemed to come up than those that were stored.

The bed where tickseeds were planted was wet. In fact, the area is often soggy in winter and spring. In normal summers it remains moist as well. But as many of us know, the summer of 1990 was extremely dry. In addition, I neglected to water the bed -- my mind being on other matters.

The dry conditions presented a bit of a problem during early summer. Spittlebugs and their Homopteran cousins, and assorted Hemipterans (true bugs), visited and fed on the plants. Tops of the plants wilted, sometimes permanently, in the hot sun. And some of the stems broke off in high winds at the point of insect damage. But B. aristosa was hardy, as most gaps in the foliage filled in later with new growth.

Despite all of this, two or three blooms showed up in late July. By late August, dozens of blooms appeared, and by early September a really spectacular show of yellow flowers developed.

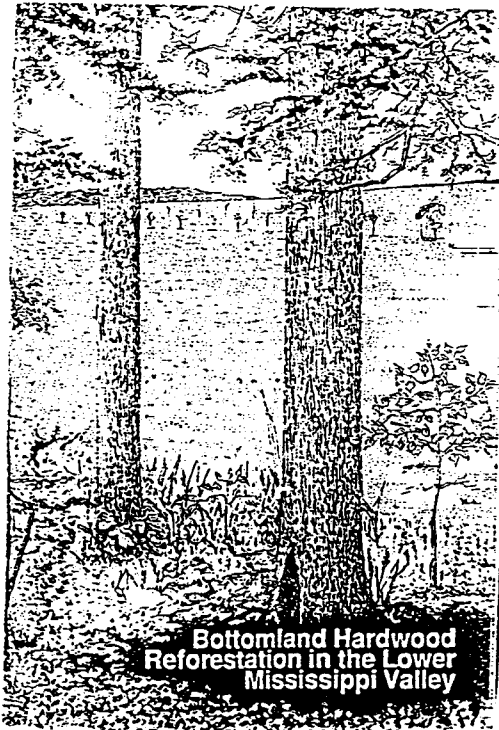
I mention all of this to indicate that a moist site, though desirable for B. aristosa, is not absolutely necessary. My plants averaged four to five feet in height. They may have been a foot or two taller had they received more rainfall.

One other caveat is in order. Identifying B. aristosa plants in seed can be tricky, as most if not all, of the bright yellow "petals" or ray flowers on the plants are faded by the time most of the seeds are formed. Several other species, most notably B. frondosa, resemble B. aristosa superficially. But B. frondosa produces only inconspicuous, rayless inflorescences -- a disappointment if one is expecting bright yellow, 2-inch diameter sunflowers.

Much of the identification confusion can be eliminated if, at the peak of the blooming period, one records in a notebook, journal, or calendar, the exact location of one or more stands of the species desired. Then, at seed collecting time, it won't matter much if the foliage has been nipped by frost or is otherwise withered.

I have found B. aristosa to be one of the easiest wildflower natives to cultivate because it makes so few demands of the gardener. In reality, very little cultivation is involved. For this reason, and the fact that it reseeds itself so readily, I feel that tickseed sunflower is a good candidate to consider for planting along roadways.--- JOE MCGEE

NEW PUBLICATION



The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, together with the U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, has recently published a pamphlet on the values of bottomland hardwoods. Included is information on the planting, care, and sources for bottomland hardwood seedlings in the South. The 28-page pamphlet (illustrated at left) represents an effort to provide information of particular interest to landowners and the general public that has been distilled from many years of research.

Copies are available free from the authors: James A. Allen, USDI-FWS, National Wetlands Research Center, Slidell, LA; and Harvey E. Kennedy, Jr., USDA-FS, Southern Forest Experiment Station, Box 227, Stoneville, MS 38776.

Among sources that the pamphlet lists for bottomland hardwood seedlings are Mississippi nurseries, including:

Delta View Nursery	Thomas Nursery	East of Eden Nursery
Route 1, Box 28	Rte 2, Box 180A, Hwy 11	Route 2, Box 206A
Old Hwy 61 South	Enterprise, MS 39330	Yazoo City, MS 39194
Leland, MS 38756	Phone 601-659-9259	Phone 601-746-5577
Phone 800-748-9018		

NEWS AND NOTES

CALENDARS. Calendars with gardeners and plant lovers in mind are now in vogue. Among those with native plant themes are: Native Plants For All Seasons, by the American Horticultural Society, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. Price \$9.95 + 1.50 shipping. Another one with a native ecosystems theme is The Nature Conservancy Calendar, available through the MS Field Office of The Nature Conservancy, P.O. Box 1028, Jackson, MS 39215. Phone 355-5357. Price \$10.00 + 3.00 shipping.

NEW CATALOG. There is a new catalog out on the market from a MS grower of perennials, wildflowers, herbs, and ornamental grasses. The catalog is chock full of descriptive information on design and cultivation ideas for species that grow well in this area. Richard Lowery and Gail Bart on have outdone themselves with their latest 26-page catalog! For those of you not on their mailing list, their address is Flowerplace Plant Farm, P.O. Box 4865, Meridian, MS 39304. Phone 601-482-5686. Price \$2.00.

PLANT SWAPPERS. For those of you into gardening and have an excess of plants, or have a need for specific plants, there is a newsletter to put you in touch with like-minded individuals. The newsletter is called "From Grandmother's Garden," and originates out of the Jackson area. The newsletter is available bimonthly at an annual subscription price of \$8.00. For more information, write to Melissa Legate, GRANDMOTHER'S GARDEN, P.O. Box 5522, Brandon, MS 39047. Phone 601-825-8672.

PLEASE WRITE: Recently, I have been receiving inquiries about hawthorn, Crataegus species, particularly mayhaws. A good opportunity for budding authors -- pun intended -- is to write a popular account of a technical journal article. One reference is J.A. Payne, and others, HortScience 25(3): 246,375, 1990, "Mayhaws: trees of pomological and ornamental interest." Also, I need help with preparing a list of potentially ornamental, but native, grasses.

Anyone with first hand knowledge of hawthorn or native grass cultivation is welcomed to write MNPS about experiences with them. Simply a two-sentence note about your favorite hawthorn or native grass is helpful. Comments are to be incorporated into MNPS Newsletter articles in the near future.--- VIC RUDIS

T-SHIRT LOGO. (in case you missed the note in the August issue). A new MNPS T-shirt logo is desired -- one that incorporates several native Coreopsis species, and possibly native shrubs and trees as well. The design should be suitable for shirts, hats, stationery, buttons, etc. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 10TH, 1991. The winner will receive a copy of Wildflowers of Mississippi by Steve Timme. Entries will be judged by Gail Barton, Halla Jo Ellis, and the Board of Directors.

This is a golden opportunity for those of you with artistic skills. Two outstanding entries are illustrated in this issue. Send MNPS a postcard on what you think.

Our first entry is by Bob Brzuszek. Bob writes that he designed the logo to show plants in relation to their habitat. The striking black-and-white logo illustrates an ecological message that is just as important as featuring individual species. T-shirt color schemes are not specified. How about magenta lettering, black outline, and teal vegetation on white or royal blue T-shirts?



The second entry is by Lynn Ashford. Lynn mentions that she designed the logo so that the T-shirt appeals to the general public -- an important consideration in helping MNPS get its message across. The logo plays on the popular "native" theme. Possible colors are golden yellow for petals, dark green for leaf and stem edges, and a lighter green for interior of leaves. Lettering would be purple or black. T-shirts are to be the "in" fashion colors. How about watermelon, pink, magenta, or royal blue?



BOOKS OF INTEREST

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden (BBG) recently has published a 104 page booklet entitled Gardening with wildflowers and native plants. The text is guest edited by Claire Sawyers, in addition to the fine garden handbook staff at the BBG. The format is a compilation of articles by prominent writers and lecturers, including Edith Eddleman on native plants and Darrel Morrison on landscape design and "natural" looking gardens. Other articles discuss shrubs, grasses, ground covers, and arboretums. Our own Chris Wells has an article on the unique concept for the management of the Crosby Arboretum. The price is \$5.95 + 1.50 shipping. For more information on this or other booklets, write to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, 109 Montgomery Street, Brooklyn, NY 11225-2097. Phone 718-287-9675.

Another book, Gardening by mail, by Barbara J. Barton (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 3rd edition) is an important gardener's reference. While containing only lists of addresses for suppliers of every gardener's needs, the material is encyclopedic in coverage, with many helpful cross-references. And it is priced at a bargain \$16.95 for the 1-inch thick, 8.5 x 11 inch paperbound volume.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR SEED COLLECTING

Let all of your acts reflect your respect for wild plants as integral parts of natural landscapes. Remember that every time you pick a flower or disturb a patch of wildflowers, the natural world around you is affected. Your actions may not be noticed, but it is the cumulative actions of many people that can cause significant damage.

Avoid collecting seed from rare or endangered species and collect only from plants that you find growing abundantly in a given area to ensure that you do not eradicate an isolated population. At the most, take only 1/3 of the seed. Leave the rest to reseed and increase the stand.

Collect seeds as soon as they are mature. Mature seeds are usually dark in color, firm and dry. Seeds that are green and moist are immature. Immature seeds generally will not germinate or will produce unhealthy seedlings. DO NOT collect seeds that have suffered insect or mold damage.

Some species are difficult to identify once they have set seed. You may wish to mark specific plants early in the season so you can come back later and collect seed.

Some plants have seeds that mature and drop immediately at staggered intervals on each plant--making collection difficult. These plants need to be checked daily to collect any newly matured seed. An alternative which works in some situations is to invert a paper bag over the blooms and tie it off with a twist-tie. Thus as seeds mature they drop off in the bag.

It is not necessary to clean all seeds before storage, but seeds with pulpy fruit should be cleaned to prevent molding. Pulp of large fruit can be removed by hand or by rubbing on a screen. Smaller fruit may be cleaned in the blender, taking care not to damage the seed. Use a low speed with brief, intermittent agitation and strain to separate the pulp from the seed.

Ideally, seeds should be planted immediately in protected beds or otherwise planted within one year of collection. Many wildflower seeds can be stored in air-dry condition. Store in paper bags in a cool, dark, and dry place. Store in your refrigerator in plastic bags, but be sure to air-dry them before placing them in plastic.

Longevity in storage varies from species to species. Check reference books for differences by individual species. --- HALLA JO ELLIS

PAST CONFERENCE AND FIELD TRIP

The 4th Annual Mississippi Native Plant Conference, held August 11, 1990 in Jackson was a big success. There were over 90 people in attendance, including a few new and prospective members. Joe McGee sold \$87.00 worth of Lobelia sp. (blue) which he donated to MNPS. We also sold a few books and T-shirts. Gail Barton and Richard Lowery were on hand with a collection of plants for sale as well. The conference included talks by Franklin Williams of The Nature Conservancy, Gail Barton, Robert Poore, and the Gardens Group of Mynelle Gardens, among others. Many thanks to Felder Rushing for organizing this event, and to the speakers, contributors, and the audience for making this a lively setting to share ideas on native plants.



Robert Poore gave an interesting talk on naturalistic landscaping that bears repeating. I'm not sure of the exact quote, but it was something like "Listen to the land (i.e., soil, topography, seasons of change, microclimate, process of succession, volunteer seedlings, water flow) ... let it tell you what it wants."

His discussion of the design of water features, while monetarily beyond the budget of many, reminded us to "read" nature as a source of inspiration for landscape designs.

The planned, but never scheduled, September/October 1990 field trip in the Starkville area never materialized. Sorry about that. The lack of rain in late summer reduced the normally good flower displays at this time of year. When rain finally arrived, Sidney McDaniel and his students were tied up with other commitments.



ESSAY CONTEST: STORYBOOK ON NATIVE PLANTS AND LANDSCAPES

The Mississippi Native Plant Society invites you to share your thoughts with children (ages 5 to 12) on the need for native plants and conservation of natural landscapes. Gail Barton, Halla Jo Ellis, and the Board of Directors will select a winner from entries received by May 15, 1991. The winner will receive a copy of Wildflowers of Mississippi by Steve Timme. The winner's school library also will receive a copy. Up to 20 additional prizes, adult size small and medium MNPS T-shirts, are to be awarded to other qualified entrants, as deemed appropriate by the judges. Winning essays are to be published in the MNPS Newsletter.

Contest Rules. Each writer may submit only one manuscript. Essays must be limited to 1000 words, approximately 4 double-spaced pages. Entrants must be enrolled full time in a Mississippi institution of higher learning for the academic year 1990-91. The contest is not open to judges and their immediate families. Handwritten or single-spaced manuscripts will not be considered. No previously published materials are allowed. All materials submitted become the property of MNPS and will not be returned. Send your manuscript, along with the name, address and phone number of the school that you are enrolled in, and the T-shirt size desired, to MNPS ESSAY CONTEST, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759. Void where prohibited.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 1991 MNPS WEEKEND FIELD TRIP. Members are needed to volunteer their time and talent for this biennial event. Reservations need to be made AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I need input from members and regarding places they want to visit, a trip coordinator, and naturalists willing to organize and lead us on field trips.

Tishomingo State Park and the Gulf Coast islands traditionally are the areas of choice. It is time consider other areas where more of our members reside. Three areas with sufficient nearby accommodations that come to mind are (a) Roosevelt State Park (30 miles from Jackson) and adjacent Bienville National Forest; (b) Lake Tiakoata, near Louisville, Legion State Park, and Tombigbee National Forest; and (c) Percy Quin State Park, near McComb and Homochitto National Forest.

APRIL 17-20, 1991 THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING. To be held at the Birmingham Botanic Garden, Birmingham, AL. For more information, contact: American Horticultural Society, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. Phone 800-777-7931.

JUNE 14-16, 1991 CONFERENCE FOR CONSERVATION AND THE USE OF NATIVE PLANTS OF THE GULF COASTAL PLAIN. To be held in New Orleans, LA. This is a satellite conference of the widely-acclaimed Cullowhee, NC conference. MNPS is a co-sponsor. For more information, contact John D. Mayronne, Native Nurseries, 317 Theard, P.O. Box 2355, Covington, LA 70434. Phone 504-892-5424.

1990-1991 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

-- Lectures, seminars, and slide shows by native plant experts, ecologists, landscape professionals, knowledgeable amateurs, and gardeners.

-- Offer Wildflowers of Mississippi by S. Lee Timme, T-shirts, and related materials for sale to promote the goals of the Society.

-- Facilitating the study of Mississippi flora and monitoring of nature preserves through newsletter announcements, networking with concerned and knowledgeable members, and awarding small grants to support research and education consistent with the Society's goals.

-- Plant and seed exchanges, creating and maintaining displays for public education and appreciation, and plant rescues in areas about to be developed.

NEWSLETTER AND MEMBERSHIP

The MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER is published 4 times annually. In addition to a calendar of upcoming events, the newsletter contains articles on native plant propagation and identification, notes on plant and seed exchanges, landscape design, habitat preserves and descriptions, reviews of books, activities, and people associated with native and naturalized plants of Mississippi.

Membership is open to any interested individual, family, or organization. If you wish to join us, please mail the application below, indicate the class of membership desired and enclose appropriate dues.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND DUES NOTICE

Please indicate class of membership desired and enclose appropriate dues:

Student \$2.50
 Regular \$5.00
 Family \$7.50
 Sustaining \$10.00
 Contributing \$25.00
 Life \$75.00

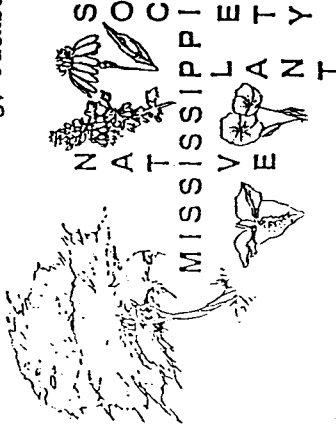
The Mississippi Native Plant Society is an organization dedicated to the scientific and educational exchange of information about native and naturalized plants occurring in the State of Mississippi.

All classes of membership receive the MNPS Newsletter. Please make checks payable to: Mississippi Native Plant Society. Return this form with payment to: Mississippi Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759

Be sure to include the following information with your payment:

Name _____
 Mailing Address _____
 Telephone No. (optional) _____
 If Mississippi, county of residence _____

PRESIDENT: Sidney McDaniel, Mississippi State 325-7570
 VICE-PRESIDENT: Chris Wells, Picayune 798-6961
 SECRETARY/TREASURER: Sherrrie Wiygul, Sturgis 465-8603
 EDITOR: Vic Rudis, Starkville 324-0430
 PAST PRESIDENT: Felder Rushing, Jackson 982-6542



T-SHIRTS with the above logo are available in adult and children sizes in GRAY background. A few in LARGE and EX-LARGE are also available in PINK or WATERMELON background. Cost \$8.50 + \$1.50 for shipping.

WILDFLOWERS OF MISSISSIPPI by S. Lee Timme is available at a cost of \$37.00, plus \$2.50 shipping 4th class (an additional \$1.00 for 1st class.) Quantity discounts are available for 5 or more books.

ATTENTION WRITERS! ATTENTION ARTISTS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS! If you've got an interest in native plants, here's your opportunity to be "published." Photos and drawings must be capable of reproduction for standard (black and white) photocopy machines. Deadlines for submission of materials is one month prior to the issue date. The deadline for the next issue is February 10.

In addition, a NEW MNPS T-SHIRT LOGO is desired -- one that incorporates several native Coreopsis species -- as well as native shrubs or trees. Send your designs to the Editor for publication in a future newsletter.

Address sales and newsletter items to: Vic Rudis, Editor, Mississippi Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759.

NOTE: MAILING LABELS with "FINAL ISSUE" have been marked for deletion. For those interested in continuing to receive the newsletter and share in membership, send dues to: Mississippi Native Plant Society, c/o Sherrrie Wiygul, Secretary/Treasurer, P.O. Box 2151, Starkville, MS 39759

MISSISSIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 2151
STARKVILLE, MS 39759



As a result of a meeting called by Fred Searcy, Jr. on April 19, 1980 at the Museum of Natural History in Jackson, the Mississippi Native Plant Society drew its first breath. The organization was formed for individuals and groups interested in all aspects of botany, particularly the vascular flora of Mississippi.

There always have been people with a love for the native plants of Mississippi. The overall purpose of the Mississippi Native Plant Society is the furtherance of knowledge about the native and naturalized plant species of the State of Mississippi and the encouragement of an attitude of respect and appreciation for these species.

GOALS are to:

- Gather and disseminate knowledge about the native and naturalized plant species and their habitats in Mississippi
- Work for the preservation of these species and conservation of their habitats
- Inform the public about these species and habitats, including their propagation, importance, ecology, and need for protection
- Encourage the propagation and use of native plants and habitats in designing residential, commercial, and public landscapes
- Promote fellowship among all persons interested in the understanding and appreciation of native plants and their habitats

PROGRAMS include:

- Field trips. In past years, Mississippi locations have included Ocean Springs, Crosby Arboretum, Davis Lake, Tishomingo State Park, Delta National Forest, Starkville, Horn Island and Ghoster. Joint meetings