



Of Leaf & Limb

Hill Country Master Gardeners Association

"Promoting education on horticulture and the environment"

December, 2006
Volume 4, Issue 12

Wednesday,
December 6, 2006
1:00 p.m.
Extension Office

Christmas Potluck
Party will start at
12:30 p.m. in the
extension office.

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President's Message:

Hi Everyone!

I hope you all had a joyous and thankful Thanksgiving, sharing great times with friends and loved ones in our beautiful Hill Country.

Please make sure you come to the Christmas Party on December 6. With all of us bringing our favorite "goodie", it will be a time of good food and fellowship. I hope everyone can join us for the fun. Tommie Airhart and Debbie Russell have done a super job of arranging for this party, along with all the others who are helping them.

As you know, the convention registration is now online and we should be receiving registrations. Also online is a copy of the agenda and the final blurbs on the tours available. I continue to be amazed and grateful to all who are working so hard on this convention. I know you are going to be proud to be a part of it. At the risk of being redundant, I want to remind you of the people who are putting this together. Roy Walston and Laurinda Boyd

started the ball rolling by evaluating the various available sites in town and making recommendations to the committee. Carol Biggs, with Carol Seminara's help, started handling public relations and continues to do so. Their hard work has generated a lot of interest in the convention and enabled us to put up the registration so early.

Dusty Gilliam and her committee started evaluating speakers and came up with a program that not only addresses topics of interest to Texas as a whole, but is also reflective of the Hill Country. Liz Althaus and her committee spent untold hours evaluating and developing interesting tours. Harold Pierrat did all the negotiations with the bus company that will transport the tours. Annese Thomas is busy developing sponsors, and John Osborn is selling vendor space.

Carol Johnson and Beverly Weidenfeller are procuring items to be put in our give away bags, and Randy Simmons and Carol Johnson are processing the

registrations and will coordinate the registration process. Fay Drozd is coordinating both the awards luncheon and the state meetings. Cheri Bolden is arranging for all the food and snacks, and last but not least Tommie Airhart will arrange for all the volunteers that will be needed both before and during the convention. Of course, a very special thanks to Carol S.'s husband, Joe, who not only designed our logo, but also has contributed expertise and banners to further our success. My thanks to all these wonderful people who are working so hard.

Next month I will be sharing with you the names of all the Committee Chairs for next year. Thank you to all those who have already agreed to Chair a committee, and to those who will as well.

See you on December 6.

HCMG Website of the Month

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/plantanswers/tamuhort.html>. ... bexar-tx.tamu.edu/HomeHort/F1Column/2004Articles/NOV28.htm This site has lots of information and pictures about the holiday favorite.



My Favorite Flora Books –

By Thomas Collins

Let me introduce myself. My name is Thomas “Tom” Collins. I’m a sixth generation Texan, who was born in San Antonio, raised in Helotes, went off to college (Texas A&M), followed by a tour in Vietnam, back to Lake Jackson Texas where I worked for Dow Chemical for 31 years. While there we raised two children (well actually my wife did), and we both decided to retire back to our roots - my wife is also a sixth generation Texan and went to that other school in Austin. I am a Brazoria County Master Gardener and a Texas Master Naturalist (Founded the Cradle of Texas Chapter and now a member of the Hill County Chapter). My passion is birding and butterfly watching. Sherry (that’s my wife) and I have traveled all over the world (six continents and 20 countries) chasing birds. Over the years we have built a large collection of bird and naturalist history books. I am also interested in and study flora, mammals, dragonflies, moths, fungi, and fossils.

While growing up in the hill county (1943-60) I learned a lot about nature. My mother was a naturalist who used her ancient and monster Audubon book to keep notes on birds, an even older book to keep her flora records, and who annually re-read her first edition of Roy Bedicheck’s Adventures with a Texas Naturalist. I still own all her books and that finally brings me back to the purpose of my article.

While in the Cradle of Texas Master Naturalist Chapter, I would occasionally write reviews on books I owned. Over the years, I have collected a lot of natural history books - good and not so good. I take time to read every page of any book I buy no matter how difficult that can be. My belief is that if you want to learn the natural history around you, then first you need a good library of books. Then you need to read and use them. Write in them, get them dirty and wet, bend page corners, press your leaves in them, make your own notes, and keep them with you no matter

where you go.

I recently dropped a note to Pam Bresler (she and I went to high school together – I was three years ahead of her) and mentioned that I might be able to write an article about my favorite ten natural history books or my favorite five flora books. Well, that’s what I get for opening my mouth (or my e-mail, that is); Pam quickly replied suggesting it might be something great to do before Christmas as books make good gifts. I can just see people lined up at the MG Christmas meeting wanting to stuff a book they got for Christmas down my throat. Maybe I’ll skip that meeting.

So here are my five (more or less) favorite Hill County Flora books by the categories of Wildflowers, Grasses, Trees/Shrubs/Vines, Landscape, and Propagation. I picked these from the thirty-two flora books I currently own.

Wildflowers

1. Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country – Marshall Enquist (The best wildflower book for the Hill Country. I use it all the time. Arranged by taxonomy.)
2. Wildflowers of Texas – Geyata Ajilvsgi (Love her book -- it fits in the hip pocket of my jeans, but hate pronouncing her name. More of a general Texas field guide and does not fully cover the HC. Arranged by flower color.)

Grasses

1. Grasses of the Texas Hill Country – Brian and Shirley Loflin (An easy to use book for the Hill County Grasses. One of the first grass book with photos and in color – plant and inflorescence.)
2. Common Texas Grasses – Frank Gould (More of a scientific book, line drawings and no photos, but still an excellent reference book. Mine is stuffed with grasses.)
3. Know Your Grasses – Dr. Barron Rector (Texas A&M TCE publication, which is also a simple guide with line drawings showing full plant and close-

ups of inflorescence.)

- Trees / Shrubs and Woody Vines
1. Trees, Shrubs, and Vines of the Texas Hill Country – Jan Wrede (I found this book very useful after only a short time on my ranch. Introduction is too lengthy, but has excellent photos and reasonably good descriptions.)
 2. Texas Trees: A Friendly Guide – Paul Cox, Patty Leslie (I have used this book all over Texas, love it and it is full of pressed leaves. Does not cover woody vines, but still fun to own. Lots of natural history information to go along with the tech stuff.)

- Landscapes and Native Gardens
1. Native Texas Plants – Sally and Andy Wasowski (If you can get this book, then buy it. It’s a wonderful book to read with great pictures and guides on how to landscape based on where you live. Includes forbs, grasses and woody plants native to Texas, and how and where to plant them. May be out of print in its original version.)
 2. I have a few others, but this is by far the best.

- Plant Propagation
- How to Grow Native Plants of Texas and the Southwest – Jill Nokes (This is the bible on how to propagate almost any native Texas flora species. Be prepared for a lot of technical directions. Includes collection and storage of plant material, and propagation includes seeds, cuttings, and transplants. Every MG should own a copy if you are interested in natives and how to grow them).

And by the way, buy yourself a copy of Roy Bedicheck’s book Adventures with a Texas Naturalist. Every Texan should own a copy.

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Nature does not complete things. She is
chaotic.
Man must finish, and he does so by making
a garden and building a wall.
-Robert Lee Frost

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Calendar of Events: (Attendance at events other than Master Gardener Meetings is optional; events are listed for those wishing to attend other educational offerings)

December 5 – Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter, will meet at Riverside Nature Center (RNC) at 2:00 p.m., 150 Francisco Lemos St., Kerrville. Presentation by Flo Oxley with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin.

December 6 – HCMG State Conference Steering Committee Chairs meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Extension Office. (Please note the time change for this meeting.)

December 6 – HCMG Christmas Decorating Committee meets at the Extension Office at 11:00 a.m. to start setting up for the Christmas party.

December 6 – HCMG Christmas Potluck Luncheon starts at 12:30 p.m. Each member is asked to bring a dish to share. The organization will furnish beverages and paper products.

December 20 – Deadline for HCMG newsletter articles (send to Martha at hnews@ktc.com <<mailto:hnews@ktc.com>>)

January 3, 2007 – HCMG monthly meeting. This is our annual Garden Party to introduce our new 2007 class members. Everyone should wear their favorite garden hat and bring a potluck dish to share. Our speaker is Katherine Crawford and she's going to discuss ornamental grasses.

Committees

Demonstration

Garden: Tony Pacini, Chair

Education:

Debbie Russell, Chair;
Cheri Bolden, Fay Drozd, Otis Fox, Eileen Haden, Ida Luckey, Sandra Martin, Mary Allen Meriwether, Judy Russell, Judy Simmons, Huibert Van Demmeltraadt, Beverly Weidenfeller

Greenhouse:

Jean Anderson, Chair

Market Days:

Tony Pacini, Chair

Horticultural Inquiry:

Pam Bresler-chair
Carol Johnson, Betty West,
Judy Simmons

Jr. Master Gardener

Program: Fay Drozd, chair

Newsletter:

Martha Stevens-editor
Carol Seminara-
assistant editor
Contributors: Betty West, Ida Luckey, Anne Brown, Carol Biggs

Nominating:

Tommie Airhart-chair

Program:

Phyllis Knight, Chair

Volunteer

Hours/Record

Keeping:

Ida Luckey, Chair

Mentoring:

Judy Simmons-Chair

H/C Garden Book

Publication:

Christine Millar, Chair

Hours and Tracking

Master Gardeners, the year is almost out and we need to complete the volunteer hours form. Any hours you have accumulated and any CEU hours need to be turned in as soon as possible.

Congratulations to Martha Stevens who was recertified in September and Carol Johnson in October. Jane Clint and Diane Whitney were recertified in November. Please take some time and fill out those forms. I would really appreciate it.

by Ida Luckey

Kudos:

Fay Drozd for demonstrating to the Hunt School Discover Garden members how to spin the cotton they grew. She also gave them a history on textiles.

Carol Biggs and Carol Seminara & Joe Houde for getting our State Conference registration information on our website. This has been a major project but it's finally posted and looks really good!

by Dusty Gilliam

HCMG November 1, 2006 - Monthly Meeting Minutes

Hill Country Master Gardener Association 2005 Executive Committee

Anne Brown – President
Harold Pieratt - Vice
President
Sharon Johnson -
Secretary
Carol Johnson -
Treasurer
Fay Drozd - Ex-officio
Advisor
Roy Walston - C. E. A.
Advisor

Of Leaf & Limb Newsletter

Editor - Martha
Stevens
Assistant Editor -
Carol Seminara
Contributors –Betty
West, Anne Brown,
Ida Luckey, Carol
Biggs

Comments, Submissions...

We welcome and encourage any comments or suggestions regarding this newsletter. Also, if you would like to submit an article for an upcoming edition, please send to: hnews@kctc.com. Indicate "Editor HCMG Newsletter" in the subject line.

The meeting was called to order by President Anne Brown at 2:00 p.m. on November 1, 2006, following a presentation on Rainwater Harvesting by Barry Wall from Texas Rainwater Systems.

Election of Officers. Tommie Airhart called for nominations from the floor. None were offered. A motion was made by Pam Bressler and seconded by Judy Simmons to accept the current slate of officers. The current officers will serve for another year.

2007 MG Class. Anne thanked all those who volunteered for the MG booth at Market Days, Kerr County Fair and other local functions. As a result of MG exposure in the community, the 2007 class has 25 students, a full class.

Treasurer's Report. Anne reported for Carol Johnson a balance of \$4,102.59. Details will be available in the treasurer's book in the MG office.

Committee Updates.

Convention. Anne reported the registration form has been finalized and should be up on the web site within the week. Registration will be up on the HCMG web site three days ahead of the TMGA site. E-mail notification will be sent to HCMG members to let them know when the registration is up. Copies of the form will be available in the MG office for those who do not have e-mail. Registration will be cut off at 650 due to meeting space limitations.

Mentoring. Judy Simmons expressed the need for volunteers to mentor new class members. A sign up sheet was passed around.

Miscellaneous.

Huibert Van Demmeltraadt announced that he will be leaving us to move back to Washington. He will be missed by all but will come back for the convention in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon K Johnson