

# Garden News



## A Mexico Adventure—Part 1

By Dr. David Creech

I've got an Agave headache. No, it's not from the *Agave tequiliana* Tequila world. It's from seeing-too-darn-many Agaves in 13 days kind of headache. But what a joy! When I was invited to be a member of an eight-member June 11 – 26, 2006 expedition to Mexico I said "Let me think about it yes"! The chance to chase down Agaves, Hesperpaloes, Yuccas, Nolinias, Sabals, Braheas, Dasylirions, Escheverias, and other wonders of the Mexico

desert and mountain universe with some of the best folks in the business, well, it just seemed too good to pass up. As a merry band of men and one woman (Janet!), we drove three vehicles a grueling 2500 plus miles in Mexico and hit known and not-so-known spots looking for special plants in a special world. Mexico enjoys amazing botany – and so much of it finds Texas and southwestern gardens to their liking. We're talking tough, durable, drought and heat tolerant plant wonders just waiting for the opportunity to call our gardens home.

The team included the following: 1) George Hull, Mountain States Nursery,



Phoenix, Arizona - <http://www.mswn.com/index2.htm> – the ultimate plantsman, designer, teacher, plant-savvy fellow and the senior citizen of our group. George is blessed with immense patience and calm, and he thought up the idea of linking each vehicle with walkie talkies, which proved to be invaluable, 2) Brian Kemble, Horticulturist, Ruth Bancroft Gardens, Walnut Creek, California - <http://www.ruthbancroftgarden.org/> – knows more about Agaves, and Escheverias than should be allowed by law, 3) Rob Nixon, environmental assessment professional, a snake, spider and desert plant world guru, 4) Sam Schaefer-Joel, biochemistry graduate, a

young Spanish-proficient rebel with a cause, cheerfully struggling to find a career juggling or doing hand stands in the middle of a lonely Mexico highway, blessed with a billy goat plant hunting strategy, and totally immersed in the culture of true plant nuts – Sam was probably the most complete and self-satisfied member of our troop, 5) Sean Hogan, Owner of Cistus Nursery, Portland, Oregon, [www.cistus.com](http://www.cistus.com), author, lecturer, and a walking encyclopedia on anything that has something to do with an obscure plant – introducer of new plants and new ideas in the Pacific Northwest – brought a rare and needed touch of sensitivity, culture and civility to our group, 6)

### Upcoming Events

#### *Less Reeves Lecture Series:*

- July 20—Greg Grant
- August 17—Aubrey King
- September 21—Neil Sperry

**Garden News** is a newsletter about the horticultural gardens at Stephen F. Austin State University:

**SFA Mast Arboretum**

**Pineywoods Native Plant Center**

**Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden**

**Jim and Beth Kingham Children's Garden**

# A Mexico Adventure—continued

(Continued from page 1)



Rob Nixon stands next to an *Agave potrerana*

Greg Starr, [www.Starr-Nursery.com](http://www.Starr-Nursery.com), Tucson, Arizona - botanist, teacher, and nurseryman of immense reputation and insight – he wrote the description of *Agave ovatifolia*, the whale's tongue Agave, a rare form found in Nuevo Leon by Lynn Lowrey that went under the name 'Sierra de Lampazos' for years before it was ever described. Greg's nursery is wonderful, a small but intense backyard mail order nursery. We're talking dangerous work best attacked by using rolled up newspapers, welder's gloves, and a whole lot of love. Ouch. Rounding out this army of plant enthusiasts was yours truly and Janet. As the only lady in an otherwise unkempt untidy group and in spite of a busy, grueling pace, Janet took the whole thing in stride. As for me, well, I'm now convinced I'm not destined to be a billy goat hunting Sedums, Crassulas, and Escheverias on the edges of

cliffs. Bald cypress are easier to get to and it's cooler down along a river or stream.

Our trip started at the border town of Douglas, Arizona, and headed south along the San Madre Oriental mountain range – scooting between desert and mountain flora as we made our way south to just north of Mexico city. The return trip took us north and west through some of the San Madre Occidental mountain range before crossing back into the USA at Nogales, Arizona. It's truly remarkable how remote and beautiful so much of Mexico's mountain land remains. There's a genuine conservation ethic brewing. Yet, it remains sadly true

that livestock and humans place amazing pressure on all but the most remote regions of the country.

## *Agave potrerana...*

After a brief scamper up a slope too steep for any normal human being, the group basked in the glory of this strange plant in flower.

found, photographed and documented over 20 Agave species in Mexico, one stands out - an *Agave potrerana* in full bloom on the first day of our trip - 29° 21.672N, 106° 28.825W, and 5218' elevation. This special spot is to the west of Hwy 45 via the rocky road to Las Varas with *Agave parryi* scattered here and there on the road into the mountains. About four miles into the canyon, someone spotted a snake-like red and yellow inflorescence peeking over a ledge. After a brief scamper

While we

up a slope too steep for any normal human being, the group basked in the glory of this strange plant in flower. Smiles and handshakes were in order, about 100 digital and film images were taken, and seed was found from plants nearby. It was a good start to the trip.

*Ferocactus pilosus*, the Mexico fire barrel cactus, is another treasure that left a mark in my brain. Blessed with a red head and orange-yellow flowers, these giant patriarchs call the desert slopes their home in many regions of Mexico.

I'm just now wrestling with my trip journal - trying hard to get the right names, the right spellings, the right plants and the right locations all down - and in the next issue, we'll take a harder look at the desert lilies and other strange plants of Northern Mexico.

## Stay tuned for part 2!



Sean Hogan photographs a group of *Ferocactus pilosus*

## Azalea Garden Update

By Barb Stump

First, let me thank those of you who sent in or brought me digital photographs of the 2006 Azalea Trail time in the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden. They will really help me with developing permanent colorful signage to explain what is in the various beds.

Next, mark your calendars for March 29–April 1, 2007. Not only will we have our normal Nacogdoches Azalea Trail festivities, but the SFA Mast Arboretum is also hosting the national convention of the

Azalea Society of America! Think "Azaleas in the Pines: A Texas Garden Party," which is our theme. We will have about 100 serious azalea enthusiasts from the US coming to enjoy the beauties of East Texas in the spring. They are home gardeners, breeders, and nurserymen; many have helped us build the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden. So now they will have the chance to see it in its glory. Some have never been to Texas, so we plan to show them a really good time.

Barbara Wagner is my co-chair, and we are

so grateful to Ina Brundrett, Arboretum board member and JoAnn Smith of the Tyler Newcomers Garden Club who are making arrangements for the first day's tours of gardens in Tyler. We will have a special plant sale of rare and hard-to-get azaleas, as well. We will be releasing registration and speaker information by mid-September, so watch the next newsletter. We will also need help with the various events involved in the convention, so there will be plenty of opportunities to volunteer and show our Texas gardeners' hospitality.

# Plant Profile: Henry Duelberg Lives!

By Greg Grant

Each year, Texas A&M promotes their Texas Superstar selections for the year. Texas Superstar plants are selected by CEMAP (the Coordinated Educational and Marketing Assistance Program) after several years of successful trialing throughout the state. CEMAP makes a concerted effort to introduce new products to the Texas nursery industry that make gardening easier and more environmentally sound for the gardening masses in the state.

One of this year's promotions, the Duelberg Sage (*Salvia farinacea* 'Henry Duelberg') happens to be a plant that I found and introduced to the Texas nursery trade. I'm an average plant breeder, but my forte seems to be stumbling across improved plants in unlikely places. I actually prefer to look for plants growing in less than average conditions as it helps insure that the general public can grow them without any special input. Although most gardeners (even the bad ones) generally provide at least the bare minimum of needs for their plants, I would prefer to find them growing with NO horticultural help whatsoever. I want to know if they can survive with no water, no fertilizer, no weeding, no grooming, and no pesticides. When I hear a plant touted as needing dividing every three years, or needing periodic fungicide treatments to thrive, I immediately strike it from my list. Sure, we all have the option of installing sprinkler systems, double digging our beds, and spraying insecticides and fungicides every ten days, but I for one "ain't gonna do it". Mainly, it doesn't make sense from a health or labor stand point. .

The free ride is over! That's why I prefer looking in poor neighborhoods, country gardens, and along Texas highways. These folks aren't known for spoiling and pampering their plants. But it's actually hard to tell. Some folks like to sneak around at night (especially during hot Texas summers), with a horticultural IV, reviving all their marginally adapted plants. THAT'S why my favorite place of all to look for Texas tough plants is in rural cemeteries. You KNOW these residents aren't spoiling their plants.

I've always said, "if the dead can grow it, you can too." And it's true. In case you haven't guessed it by now, the Duelberg

sage came from a rural Central Texas cemetery. Not just any cemetery mind you, but one with no irrigation. I first spotted it during a hot, dry, Texas summer on my way to Dr. Welch's annual Oktober Gartenfest in Winedale. It didn't look great, but it WAS alive, which was more than could be said for most of the other "real" plants planted there. It had also been recently cut to the ground with a "weed whacker," so there weren't even any blooms on it when I was there. I was on a quest at the time to find native populations of *Salvia farinacea*.

*Salvia farinacea* (mealy cup sage/blue sal-



*Salvia farinacea* 'Henry Duelberg'

via) is popular throughout the world, primarily as an annual bedding plant. Unfortunately, like most of our global bedding plants, European breeders have bred most of the toughness and vigor out of them. In the wild, the plants are about three feet tall with gray-green leaves and light to medium blue flowers. Typical nursery plants are about a foot tall with dark purple-blue flowers. Being dwarf isn't always better though. In most of the bedding plant trials I've planted and evaluated, the dwarf forms of plants are inferior in performance to their larger sized parents. It only makes sense. After all, the reason they are dwarf is that they don't grow! If they actually GREW, they wouldn't be dwarf any more, right? Ever since the Victorian "bedding out" period, breeders think all bedding plants have to be less than a foot tall. This desire actually sprang from the practice of planting floral carpets to be viewed from upper story castle windows. Well guess what? My "castle" has no upper

stories! Heck, I've barely got windows.

Plants bred to look like blueberry muffins sitting in the landscape might work fine during a mild, moist Dijon summer but unfortunately often don't cut the hot mustard here in Tejas. In order to survive hot Texas summers, which may be desert dry with periodic interruptions of flash flooding, plants BETTER BE VIGOROUS. Toss in foot traffic, cars, armadillos, grandchildren, inebriated relatives, etc., and being dwarf doesn't look like such a blessing. If our plants aren't growing and constantly repairing damage, they are often doomed. I would much rather trim an overly vigorous plant back than to be forced to replace a dead "Miss Manners."

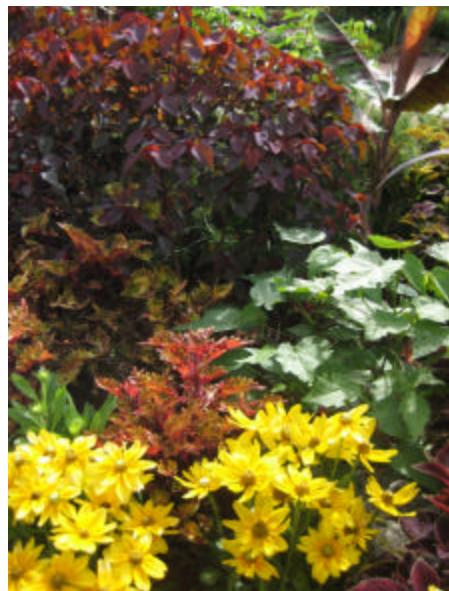
'Henry Duelberg' Salvia is about three feet tall with fairly dark blue flowers, darker than typical native populations of *Salvia farinacea*. As a matter of fact, the leaves are wider, more serrated, and not as gray as native Mealy Cup Sage either. This has led to the speculation by some that it is of hybrid origin. I can't imagine for the life of me what other species would be involved. Although the cemetery where it was growing was a bit east for *Salvia farinacea*, there were no other Salvias in the cemetery, or were even native in the area. It

also has a light fruity scent to the foliage instead of that of a sage. I'm not sure how long they had been growing there, but it seemed to be for some time. The plants had reseeded quite prolifically in the grass and even in the cracks of the concrete curbing. Henry Duelberg died in 1935 and his wife Augusta in 1903. I have this theory that Mr. Henry was a botanical sort and was dabbling in salvia breeding (you know "the father of Texas botany," Ferdinand Lindheimer, was German too). When Mr. Duelberg died, I supposed they planted his handy-work on his grave. Long live Henry! Just in case I'm wrong, I named a white flowered seedling 'Augusta Duelberg' from the same grave for his wife. Who knows, SHE may have been the horticultural wonder woman. Dr. Welch says she would have been called "Gustie." Despite the origins of these salvias I do know one thing. Unlike other European salvias on the market, Henry Duelberg lives!

# Shining Bright in the Summer Sun: An Arboretum Update

By Dawn Stover

It takes some really brave plants to stand up to the heat and humidity of our Texas summers. Many blooms fade or disappear altogether when the sun sits high in the sky. Summer annuals do the trick, but the same old Periwinkles and Petunias just don't cut the mustard in every situation. We're experimenting with some bold color combinations and unusual plant choices in the newest garden renovation at the Arboretum.



The area formerly known as the Daylily Garden has become a trial garden for new and unusual annuals and tropicals, as well as serving as a repository for my ever growing Coleus habit. (I just found a nursery with over two hundred varieties available – uh oh!) We're still at odds over a name. The "Rest and Relaxation Garden" is what we thought about originally, but with the cacophony of color present it's more rowdy than relaxing.

This new garden is sizzling with the warm, tropical colors of summer. There are little nooks of complementary plant pairings, each with the unifying theme of those tempting Coleus. It's all woven together with plenty of other heat loving plants. Unique specimens create focal points



within those color themed pockets. Dwarf Bananas, Yucca, Elephant Ears, variegated Tapioca, Castor Beans, and purple Sugar Cane all erupt from a turbulent sea of color. A few flowers can be found, but most of the color is provided by foliage or fruit. Ornamental Peppers, burgundy Cotton, Joseph's Coat, purple Fountain Grass, maple-leaved Hibiscus, and some 'Australia' Cannas do the trick. Mexican and Profusion Zinnias, Black-eyed Susans, Pentas, and Porter Weed provide the flower power. And where else can you find Chinese Hats next to Chicken Gizzards and Hot Lips, all within reach of Shooting Stars?

In the gaudy confines of this warm embrace, I've been able to play with some really neat things. The *Wercklea ferox* is intriguing visitors with its massive, spiny leaves. The *Cassia nemophila* and *Euphor-*



*bia tirucalli* 'Sticks on Fire' both look like a feathery mass of snaky sticks. *Euphorbia cotinifolia* and *Euphorbia* 'Diamond Frost' are total opposites with the bold burgundy foliage of the former, and delicate foliage and airy white bracts of the latter. We'll give the Mexican Weeping Bamboo,

*Osteospermum acuminata*, a hardiness trial come this winter, and we'll also see just how hardy the *Abutilon* really are.

When I give talks to garden clubs, I inadvertently note that every plant in my talk is my favorite. That's the way I feel about this garden, but if you gave me Chinese water torture and forced me to pick some winners they'd be: *Rudbeckia hirta* 'Prairie Sun' – a Black-eyed Susan with huge butter yellow flowers with greenish yellow centers, *Capsicum annuum* 'Black Pearl' – a gorgeous ornamental pepper with midnight purple foliage and glossy purple fruits, *Stachytarpheta mutabilis* – a coral



Porter Weed with blossoms irresistible to butterflies and hummingbirds, *Jatropha integerrima* - this shrub known as Peregrina is stunning with vividly, indescribable pink/red flowers, and *Zinnia x* 'Profusion Apricot' – yes, I know this one isn't exactly exotic, but it is absolutely the most fun flower to find complementary colors for. Included in my list of favorites are every other plant mentioned in this article, as well as all of the coleus and a few other things I may have forgotten. Ok, so I like plants. Good thing it's my job! Stop by the new garden on your next visit, and don't forget to bring your shades!

## Saturday Seminars

September 16: Landscaping is for the Birds with Greg Grant

December 2: Deck the Halls: Decorating for the Holidays with Dawn Stover  
call 936-468-1832 for details!

# PNPC Update

By Greg Grant

We're slowly but surely recovering from Hurricane Rita. Thanks to the SFA Grounds Dept. we have gotten the large stumps of the fallen trees removed from the yard. As our budget permits, we'll order in soil to fill in those holes and to correct erosion problems in front of the house, near the sidewalk at Raguet Street.

We successfully hosted another Lone Star Regional Native Plant Conference this year and everyone in attendance received one of my new Pam Puryear pink Turk's caps.

Of course Elyce has worked her usual wonders training hoards of school children and volunteers here. (See the education update for details!)

Work on our two miles of trails is progressing with completion scheduled for September.

We've also begun work on a Firewise

landscape for the back yard, complete with signage. It will provide examples of how to save your home and possessions, through proper landscape design, in the event of unfortunate wildfires.

Mimi's Garden is finally being repaired with installation scheduled for the fall when we get much needed rain.

I've put up five handmade cedar bluebird houses here at the PNPC (with more scheduled), and we raised four families of bluebirds here this spring and will hope for even more next year.

Plans are in order to renovate the beds in front of the Tucker House complete with educational signage. We will have xeric, mesic, and riparian areas represented. There will be huge changes in the design and plant material here along with new trails. We're looking forward to this challenge as well as the volunteer oppor-

tunities it presents. Curators are needed for the different ecosystems and display beds. I also need an invasive species brigade to tackle Chinese Privet and assorted other rampant exotics. The PNPC is a large property and we're doing what we can, but a few more hands would be most welcome.

Many thanks to Betty Manning (weekend watering), Sara Bowie (weeding), Don Parsons (assorted), and any others that I may have missed. Also thanks to Diana Walker and the Four Seasons Garden Club for a donation that went towards native wildflower and grass seed for our Marsh-Meadow and driveway repair.

We also recently received a nice grant from the George and Fay Young Foundation for greenhouse/growing supplies. Thank you Barbara Stump and Sue Ripley for securing this for us.

## Arboretum Staff Help With Durst-Taylor Gardens

By Barb Stump

Greg Grant, Research Associate at the PNPC, and Barb Stump, Research Associate for Development of all of the SFA Mast Arboretum gardens, have looked backward to the 1840s-1860s to help with a new garden that is about to become a reality in 2006. They have teamed with Jeff Abt, noted *Daily Sentinel* garden columnist and garden photographer, and Nanny Smith, member of the City of Nacogdoches Historic Sites Board, to bring to life the plan that was developed by Houston landscape architect Janet Wagner in 2002. Since that time the City's Historic Sites Manager Brian Bray has been overseeing the restoration of the Durst-Taylor House and the construction of a visitor's center. SFA Mast Arboretum board member Diana Walker has led the effort to obtain appropriate furnish-

ings for the home, which is on the Federal and State Historic Sites Registers. The period of 1840-1860 was chosen as the period for which there was the most documentary evidence.

Period-looking fencing around the gardens is just about completed and now the planting can begin. Over a year ago Flora Garden Club and Four Seasons Garden Club gave donations dedicated to the gardens at the Durst-Taylor project. These donations allowed us to order 'Indian Cling' peaches and 'Brown Turkey' and 'Celeste' figs for the Durst-Taylor orchard. The trees have been growing to a good size for planting under Greg Grant's care at the PNPC. They will be planted—hopefully this summer—in the Durst-Taylor orchard once the planting holes have been dug and judged free

of significant archeological artifacts. Meanwhile, the Kitchen Garden and a raised Flower Garden are in the works as well. Crinums from the early 1800s will help in several of the wetter spots on the site: the species *Crinum bulbispermum* (before 1800), and hybrids *C. x herbettii* (1819), *C. x digweedii* (1820), *C. x gowenii* (1820). The hunt is on for roses and vines that the Blackburn Family might have put in their garden during the 1840s-1860s. If you have suggestions for heritage, Nacogdoches-adapted plants from this period, or have very old pear trees, please contact either Greg Grant or Barb Stump. You are all invited to the official opening of the historic site in the next few months, depending on the schedule of the featured speaker, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison.

# Education Update

By Dawn Stover

Elyce Rodewald is a busy lady. As our Education Coordinator she is responsible for over 8,800 children participating in programs through the arboretum from last September until now. Elyce is on a well deserved vacation, but we thought we'd like to share a little of what she's been up to.

## Bugs, Bees, Butterflies and Blossoms

Over 2,300 kindergarten through 3rd graders descended upon the arboretum over a 5 day period. The Texas Forest Service manned tree stations were the kids were taught about trees inside and out. Members of the Pineywoods Bee Keepers Association were on hand to provide live demonstrations with observational beehives. SFASU Dept. of Education interns presented puppet shows about forest ecosystems and decomposition and had special viewings of live butterflies in all stages of their life cycle. SFA Mast Arboretum and Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful volunteers as well as the Bluebonnet Garden Club made everything run smoothly. Elyce as well as Dr. Cheryl Boyette and Dr. Alan Sowards are the brilliant masterminds behind this wonderful program!

## Lone Star Regional Cullowhee Plant Conference

Over 150 adults participated in the third native plant conference held at Stephen F. Austin State University. Registrants came from as far away as Arizona, Tennessee, and even New York! Twenty four experts gave programs, tours, and workshops. This is the first year the workshops were offered and they were a huge success! A plant sale and book signing were held at the Native Plant Center, and a bar-b-q dinner wrapped up the event.



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↓  
**Go Native Field Day**  
↑  
↓ The Native Plant Center saw 600 4th  
↓ through 8th graders over a whirlwind  
↓ 3-day period. Individuals from Forest  
↓ Resources Institute, Texas Forest  
↓ Service, Arboretum and Native Plant  
↓ Center volunteers, and special primitive  
↓ fire expert Neil Stilley assisted  
↓ with educational activities including:  
↓ technology, determining water qual-  
↓ ity through macroinvertebrate bioas-  
↓ says, edible and medicinal plants, and  
↓ friction fire.  
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## Thank you to our wonderful summer camp scholarship donors!

John Anderson	Bonnie Hammett
Cheryl Boyette	Leah Kahn
Ina Brundrett	Peter Loos
David Creech	Darrel McDonald
Heinz Gaylord	Sue Ripley
Greg Grant	Diana Walker

## Graduate Student Corner—Lacey Stokes

For two weeks, I shared a classroom with fellow “chlorophyll addicts” from all over the Northern Hemisphere. Well intended plant folk gathered in Denver last month for the second annual Applied Plant Conservation training program. If the name sounds serious, that’s because these people take plant preservation seriously! Johnny Randall of the North Carolina Botanic Garden summed up the attitude of most of the participants

with the comment, “I won’t let a plant go extinct on my watch..”

The two weeks consisted of many presentations from professors, botanic garden directors and botanists sharing their knowledge of the best ways to preserve rare and endangered plant populations. We learned the best ways to monitor plants in the wild, how to weave the message of conservation into programs at arboreta or botanic gardens, and many

other lessons. We even had a class on grant writing and volunteer programs. The classes prepared us with tools to apply a plant conservation program at our



# Education Update: Summer Camps

## Wonder Woods

This camp for 4-6 year olds was held at the Piney Woods Native Plant Center. There were 20 kids in attendance, 5 of which were on scholarship. Arboretum volunteer Kay Jeffrey was instrumental in developing the curriculum for the theme of "Who Lives in This Tree?" Traveling Pierre, a capricious squirrel, appeared in new places each day leading to the lesson for the day.



Wonder Woods

## Mill Creek Camp

7-11 year olds traveled to Mill Creek Gardens to learn about "Connections in Nature", a lesson on food webs. 26 Children attended, 9 of those on scholarship. Dr. Kroll taught about deer, and Neil Stilley showed how to use an atl atl. (Yeah, that's what I said too.) An atl atl helps throw a spear farther and harder. The kids also learned about snakes and first aid and spent a day canoeing on Mill Pond. There was a search for debris huts made at last year's camp. These are shelters built from sticks, leaf litter, and pine straw. Even with a hurricane, most were still intact. The Comanches, a team of campers, gave their debris hut a remodel complete with curtains! And if you wondered where all the soda bottles Elyce asked for went, these campers turned them into aquariums to study aquatic ecosystems.



Mill Creek Camp



Wilderness Adventures

## Wilderness Adventures

Seventeen 12-16 year olds participated in this camp at Mill Creek Gardens; 5 students attended on scholarship. The ultimate goal of this camp was the "Big Paddle." In preparation, the kids went through a ropes course at the Pineywoods Conservation Center. Chris Sawyer taught first aid and led a "situational" first aid hike, and Dawn Vollmer taught orienteering. Dr. Charles Allen led an edible plant hike. Canoe skills were practiced every day. Two teams competed in a camping triathlon complete with a canoe race, tent set-up, and compass race. The teams were expected to complete the course in about 15 minutes. The winning team came in at 3 minutes and 49 seconds, and the runners up in 4 minutes and 7 seconds. Hooray! The week ended with the "Big Paddle," a canoe trip down the Neches River, and an overnight camp out at Earthsprings Retreat Center in Grapeland. Each camper helped with set up, cooking and clean up, and they went on a night hike. Makes you want to be a kid again, huh?



## Lacey Stokes—continued

own arboreta and botanic gardens.

From the SFA Mast Arboretum in the Pineywoods, we've been working with a few rare species of East Texas plants. The lovely scented and brightly colored Texas Trailing Phlox is one of my favorite plants in peril. Habitat loss and fewer fires in the forest threaten the phlox populations. Folks at the PNPC have been growing lots of phlox for reintroduction at a site in Mill Creek Gardens and for the Forest Service to plant in the Big Thicket.

We've also had success reintroducing the Neches River Rose Mallow at a site in Mill Creek Gardens. This is a beautiful hibiscus in danger of being lost in the wild due to its home along marshy river sides being dried up by man and Mother Nature.

There are many gems in the East Texas forest worthy of our attention. Organizations such as the Arboretum and PNPC play a key role in studying those plants, teaching the public about them, and reviving the wild populations.

To find out more about plant conservation in East Texas visit <http://pnpc.sfasu.edu/rare/index.htm>

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ASA 2007 National Convention

## *Azaleas in the Pines – A Texas Garden Party*

Thursday, March 29 – Sunday, April 1, 2007

The Fredonia Hotel & Convention Center, Nacogdoches, Texas

Tours of gardens and nurseries in Nacogdoches, Tyler, and East Texas, including the largest azalea garden in Texas -- the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University. Evening lectures on azalea care and garden design. Visit [www.nacogdochesazaleas.com](http://www.nacogdochesazaleas.com) for conference information.

### **Hotel Reservations**

A group rate of \$79 is available for conference attendees. When making reservations, ask for the **National Azalea Society** group rate. For reservations call 800-594-5323 or 936-564-1234.

For information about Nacogdoches visit [www.visitnacogdoches.org](http://www.visitnacogdoches.org).

