



# SFA Gardens NEWS

## Notes from the Director

By Dr. David Creech

Farmers and gardeners just like to talk about weather. It's always too hot, too wet, too cold or too dry. Well, this summer we experienced the impact of a long rainless spell and blasting heat.

It's been depressing to see storms rushing our way just disappear right before sliding into Nacogdoches. Our campus forest is seeing some old soldiers slip away to tree heaven. Keeping up with irrigation breaks, clogged emitters and sprinkler heads gone awry is all part of saving rare thirsty plants. Duke Pittman and crew members have done a fine job keeping plants away from death's door. Thankfully, a few recent storms have provided much needed relief.

Other than that, there's a plethora of good news. First on the list, the rumor is true; there's a new greenhouse coming to the horticulture facility at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center. The word is the greenhouse will be up and running before Christmas. We can't wait to move into the gutter-connected, 60-by-100-foot, two-bay heated and cooled range with 8-foot sidewalls that will be one mighty plant-growing machine. Good things happen to those who are patient, persistent and polite. Dawn said I was one out of three,

which isn't all that bad.

There's a lot of excitement at the Moody Gardens research plot on Galveston Island. Malcolm Turner and our crew have been keeping the plots mulched and weeds beat back. Growth has exceeded our expectations. Daniel Morgan, graduate research assistant in environmental science under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Farrish, director of environmental science at SFA, has been monitoring the ground water beneath the plots. The plots are near the bay and three or four feet down, the salt levels are frightening. Still, barring a hurricane or tsunami, the plants look great. Dr. Steve Wagner, professor of biology, has a number of interesting projects studying mycorrhizal inoculants and their impact on the establishment of woody ornamentals in a high-salt environment. It's been a great learning experience for our student workers and Malcolm has taken a lead in making it happen. The project has been blessed

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with the support of Danny Carson, horticulturist, and Sabino Bilon, who manages landscapes and irrigation at Moody Gardens. Both have kept a close eye on the planting. The Texas Forestry Association is holding its annual meeting at Moody Gardens this year, and we're excited that we've been asked to showcase our SFA work with a pre-conference tour on Oct. 17.

The big excitement is our golden kiwifruit crop is in, and it's great. On Aug. 29, we harvested a little more than 735 pounds from two varieties, Golden Dragon and Golden Sunshine. That doesn't include what our student crew ate along the way. While the drought has been a bit discouraging, Malcolm has been adding emitters and increasing the frequency of watering. This project is funded through a Texas Department of Agriculture Specialty Crops Block Grant, which we share with our good friends at Texas A&M University. By next spring, we will have five evaluation plots in Texas (Nacogdoches, Mount Pleasant, Tyler, Simonton and College Station). We're getting ready for the second annual kiwifruit conference (see upcoming events on Page 11). The goal is to determine if kiwifruit 1) has promise as a new commercial crop in Texas 2) is suitable only for homeowner production or 3) is just not worth planting. Based on the past five years, let's eliminate No. 3 right now. With a 40,000-pound-per-acre potential yield, the crop requires a very strong trellis system to support the vines, leaves and fruit, and infrastructure costs can be substantial. It grows a bit like kudzu on steroids, so that might be an issue.

Dawn Stover and Jordan Cunningham are building the inventory of woody and herbaceous plants for the Oct. 6 plant sale. We have some never-before-offered-in-commerce plants you just have to buy. Many of them are flowing into the new nursery we've constructed on the north side of the horticulture facility at the PNPC. As I expected, it didn't take long to fill up the place!

I've long complained about our skirmishes with deer, hogs, rabbits, squirrels, opossums, beavers and raccoons. Dry times mean they like our garden. Pigs and deer make



SFA Gardens staff members and students harvested a little more than 735 pounds of two kiwifruit varieties in August, Golden Dragon and Golden Sunshine.

a big mess. The others gnaw through poly pipe and have even taken to chomping through Schedule 40 PVC pipe risers. Now we can add another mean varmint. Nutria, a type of rodent, have arrived and decided our Lanana Creek bald cypress collection is on the buffet. One of our student assistants, Robert Morgan, is slowly making his way through the planting installing chicken wire tubes to keep these toothy beasts at bay.

We're perfectly poised for a great year. A new greenhouse tops the list. The 2019 Theresa and Les Reeves Lecture Series is in place. The plant sale looks to be one of our best. We've got a plethora of seminars and workshops planned. Anne Sullivan, our program associate, does a remarkable job of dealing with proposal details, purchasing and budget headaches, and keeping her boss in line. Elyce Rodewald and Jocelyn Moore continue to carry the mission of environmental and horticultural education to thousands of our youngest citizens. Thank you for supporting this great garden adventure and, until next time, let's keep planting.

## Jimmy Hinds Park Muscadine Planting

By Dr. David Creech



Created in recognition of SFA's first agriculture instructor, Jimmy Hinds Park is part of SFA Gardens and is located on Austin Street. Gifts from Barbara Finney, Jimmy's daughter, have supported much of our work here. Barbara has made this special two-acre patch a part of her family's legacy in Nacogdoches.

Jimmy Hinds Park is home to a special planting of muscadine grapes. We have 60 varieties in the planting, which includes some numbered selection material from Dr. Stephen Stringer with the U.S. Department of Agriculture located in Poplarville, Mississippi. We are using a three-wire system to get a wide

canopy to maximize fruit production. This year is really the first crop and some varieties were loaded, some not.

One of my favorites this year was ‘Eudora,’ which was introduced in 2009 by Stringer. ‘Eudora’ has berries of good size and medium skin thickness, and I thought the flavor was excellent. The most unique characteristic of ‘Eudora’ is even ripening clusters that allow homeowners to pick the entire cluster at one time.

Since this is Texas, we like big fruit, and one of the bigger berries this year was ‘Hall,’ a 2014 University of Georgia release with some berries more than one inch in

diameter. It produced no pedicel scar at harvest and was quite tasty. To be honest, it’s been difficult to get good production data due to two- and four-legged visitors. In the year ahead, we will be putting the entire planting behind a deer-proof fence and construct a nice gate. That’ll stop our four-legged residents from nibbling on the vines. I’m not sure it’ll stop our problems with two-legged critters who have obviously concluded that no fence means they are licensed to enjoy guilt-free harvests. A fence, gate and “Research in Progress” sign will change that, we hope.



## A Quick Healthy Kiwi Treat

By Anne Sullivan

I love recipes with six ingredients or less. If there are any more than that, my eyes start glazing over. I think I learned that from Helen Corbitt. Helen’s recipes were almost always short and sweet. She was the chef for Neiman Marcus’ Zodiac Room for many years and ahead of her time in advocating the use of only the finest and freshest ingredients. Rumor has it that Stanley Marcus told Helen when he hired her, “I don’t care how much lettuce you throw out at the end of the day, just get people into the store.” And that she did.

Here’s a six-ingredient recipe for the kiwifruit samples Dr. David Creech has been passing out from the recent kiwifruit harvesting at SEA Gardens.

This recipe came, not from Helen, but from Jerry James Stone, an American food blogger, vegetarian chef and activist. As an internet and social media personality, Stone is known for his simple gourmet recipes and advocacy for a sustainable food and wine movement. Enjoy!

### Kiwifruit Salsa

**Start to finish:** 15 minutes

**You’ll need:**

8 kiwifruit  
3 tablespoons red onions, chopped  
1 jalapeño pepper, minced  
2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped  
½ lime, juiced  
Sea salt

**Directions:**

1. Cut firm but ripe kiwis into ¼ inch cubes.
2. Chop up the red onion.
3. In a large mixing bowl, add minced jalapeño, chopped cilantro and lime juice to the kiwifruit and red onion. Gently mix together to prevent the salsa from getting mushy.
4. Add sea salt to taste.
5. Transfer to a small serving bowl and dig in. Eat within a day or two — if it lasts that long.



## Why I Love Teaching Children About the Outdoors

By Yasmine Abdallh

Since my sophomore year, I have worked with children in educational programming at SFA Gardens and as a counselor for the Nacogdoches Naturally afterschool program. Our program's home, the PNPC, gives children and adults a space to learn about and enjoy nature.

In July, I attended the five-day Teacher Conservation Institution training at the Bug Scuffle Inn in Cushing. We participated in a training using the Project Learning Tree curriculum and became certified to teach about forests through games and activities that facilitated all ages. We also toured lumber mills, tree farms, logging operations and the Texas Forestry Museum in Lufkin. I came back from TCI with the basic forestry knowledge and resources I need to further the children's connection with the piney woods this semester at Nacogdoches Naturally.

Educating today's youth about the forest and their place in the environment is so important because even in a beautiful garden and

woods-filled place like Nacogdoches it's easy to forget to spend time outside. Some people live their whole lives without knowing where the food they eat comes from or how the paper they write on was made. I love my job with the SFA Gardens education program because I get the chance to work with people of all ages who want to learn more about the world around them.

"Teaching young people how to think, not what to think" is one of the core ideals of Project Learning Tree. I see this ideal reflected so much in SFA Gardens' programs, which is another reason why I love working here.



**Clockwise from left:** Yasmine Abdallh, an SFA student studying liberal and applied arts, participates in a five-day conservation training. During a field trip, Abdallh and other participants visit a lumber mill. Abdallh learns how to mount insects.

## The Lobelia Sisters

By Jordan Cunningham



*Lobelia cardinalis*

In the past, I have tried to be different and say that summer is my favorite season. But after suffering the high temperatures and unruly humidity of July and August, I am looking forward to the ever-trendy time of year known as fall.

Fall is great! Sometimes we don't experience cooler days and brisk nights till late November, but fall has other things going for it, like several holidays, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and our Fabulous Fall Festival Plant Sale.

The fall plant sale is definitely the sign that fall is coming. Plants in the fall sale are strong and wise. These guys have just completed summer boot camp. They have survived and thrived

through tough, hot conditions with limited rain and long hours in the sun. By the time fall rolls around, they are ready to relax and show off. I can think of no better example of strong, showy fall plants than our Lobelia sisters, *Lobelia cardinalis* and *Lobelia puberula*. These girls put the "fabulous" in Fabulous Fall Festival.

Of these two, *Lobelia cardinalis* caught my eye first. The common name is cardinal flower, and it is a wonderful shade of red. In my previous article, I shared my love of red and red flowers. *Lobelia cardinalis* has a flower color that truly speaks to my heart. Even in the heat of the summer, our nursery pad is always accented with cardinal red. This



girl is hard to miss.

The cardinal flower can grow up to three feet tall in peak season. The stems are full of perfect little tubular flowers with three thick lower petals and two thinner upper petals. The flowers look like little birds in flight. The color and tube shape of the flowers make them perfect nectar sources for hummingbirds and butterflies, especially in the fall when most other flowers are finishing up. The cardinal flower is a perennial that over-winters nicely for us. In the late spring, it emerges as a small clump of leaves. It's not until summer that it really starts to take off and become the multi-stemmed showstopper that we find at the fall sale.

The cardinal flower can tolerate some shade, but we grow it in full sun. The results speak for themselves. The most important thing to remember with this perennial is that the roots prefer constant moisture. The cardinal flower can tolerate some flooding, but soil that dries out completely is not ideal. Plant in a moist, sunny spot for the best performance.

If *Lobelia cardinalis* is the loud, sociable sister, then *Lobelia puberula* is the sweet and quiet one. But she is equally as beautiful. The common name is downy lobelia, and it has what we refer to as blue flowers. In nature, the flowers range from deep blue to lavender, but our crop sports a light elegant purple. The flowers are very similar to *L. cardinalis* with three thick lower petals and two thinner

upper petals, but where *Lobelia cardinalis* is covered in butterflies, *Lobelia puberula* is humming with bees. That is because this lobelia has tubular flowers that are shorter and just a little bit fatter. This particular shape makes it easier for bees to reach inside and collect nectar and pollen. *Lobelia puberula* is similar to her sister in many ways: her bloom time is from summer to fall, she prefers moist soils, and she is a trustworthy perennial. The light preferences also are similar. *Lobelia puberula* may prefer sun to partial shade, but once again we have it growing out in full sun with regular watering, and she is thriving. This plant can grow anywhere from one to three feet tall. From my own comparison, I have found *Lobelia puberula* more robust with squat flowers and more angular stems and leaves. It might pair well with pink salvia in a tea garden or maybe planted in front of a dark green hedge where the light purple can shine and look sophisticated.

One of the best things about these two lobelia is that they are native to Texas. *Lobelia*

*cardinalis* can be found in a large part of the U.S. from Maine to Florida, through most of Texas and all the way over to California. *Lobelia puberula* has a much smaller range and can be found growing in places such as North Carolina and the shady damp soils in Texas. Lobelia are plentiful in these states, but they can be scarce in some areas because they are so beautiful that people often pick them and reduce the seed bank.

It feels good knowing that you are planting a native species in your yard. They are more likely to do well because they belong here and are accustomed to our soils, temperature and weather conditions. Plus, by planting these two sisters, we are helping increase the seed bank in our area. Do you need some late summer or early fall interest in your garden? If so, you need some lobelia in your life. (And in your garden!)



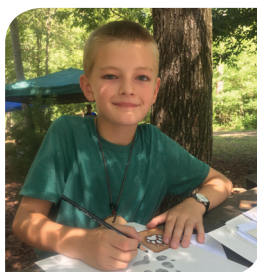
**Left:** *Lobelia puberula* is a calm, light purple color, and the bees love it. **Right:** The two Lobelia sisters, *Lobelia cardinalis* and *Lobelia puberula*, add nice color to the landscape.



## Lifelong Memories Made at Pineywoods Summer Camps

By Jocelyn Moore

We wrapped up our 17th year of Pineywoods Camps this summer with new friends and lifelong memories. For our youngest campers, we learned about the wondrous powers of our Wonder Woods animal friends. Campers were shocked to learn that the so-called flying squirrel can glide in the air up to 100 yards. Both children and staff were surprised to



learn that the daddy longlegs, a member of the arachnid family, is technically not a spider as it has no venom and cannot produce silk. Instead, it is a scavenger insect relying on the dead prey of other spiders and insects.

At the SFA Experimental Forest, our Jack Creek campers studied several species of canines

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found in East Texas, including fox, coyote and wild dogs. We explored the reasons wolves are no longer present in this part of the country and the varying effects this loss has on our piney woods bioregion. A favorite activity was a canine scavenger hunt on Jack Creek Trail where campers used all the canine senses, from sight and smell to hearing and cleverness, to find each clue. Another cherished activity was Snake Day presented by Captain Cole and the Venom Response Team with the Nacogdoches County Fire and Rescue team, along with other wildlife experts Rick Schaffer and Kerry Barnes. Campers were given the opportunity to hold live snakes and learn about the animal's contribution of rodent control. Finishing the week, we enjoyed a gorgeous time canoeing and fishing at Lake Naconiche. The new play structure, complete with outdoor instruments, was a huge hit!

Our oldest campers enjoyed an exciting week at Wilderness Adventures. Partnering with SFA's Outdoor Pursuits, campers enjoyed climbing the rock wall at the SFA Student Recreation Center, zip lining at the high ropes course, learning the atlatl (spear throwing) at Caddo Mounds State Historic Site, camping at Ratcliff Lake and canoeing more than eight miles on the Neches River. Campers finished the week by cooking breakfast tacos, using their newly acquired skills of orienteering, fire building, canoe steering and more during the Outdoor Olympics.

Pineywoods Camps are unique. We strive to create

fun, hands-on and educational programming that instills a love for the outdoors and lifelong environmental stewardship. In an evaluation survey that was recently returned, one camper reflected on how the camp inspired him:

"Every morning, I go outside and take a whiff of fresh air. There is nothing compared to the great outdoors, and I wouldn't have learned it if not for you."

We are enormously thankful to all our volunteers and generous donors who make these camps possible and affordable. We were thrilled to provide an enriching camp experience for all, including many students from the Boys and Girls Club who attend our afterschool program, Nacogdoches Naturally.



## Trees are Terrific

By Dawn Stover

I normally don't write about trees, but it's 96 degrees outside with no sign of a breeze. It's hot, y'all. I found myself in a parking lot recently migrating to the 3 inches of shade a particular tree was offering a parking spot like it was a life raft on the Titanic. The shade didn't really cover the parking spot, but at least it made me feel a bit better.

Fall is quickly approaching, even though it doesn't feel like it, and fall is a great time to plant trees. Texas Arbor Day falls on the first Friday in November, and that's a good mark to the beginning of tree planting season. We have a grand time in Nacogdoches for Texas Arbor Day with a tree planting event somewhere in our fair city. I'd estimate that Nacogdochians have planted more than 1,000 trees in

public spaces within the last five years during this event.

Whether you're planting for shade, beauty or food, allowing trees to establish throughout our milder temperatures in fall and winter helps encourage root system development before the awful heat of the following summer sets in. That's why I'm writing about trees this go round, and we will have a fair amount of trees at the Fabulous Fall Festival Plant Sale on Oct. 6; mostly shade trees, but a few ornamentals and edibles, too.

We will have several great oak species to plant for shade. The Shumard oak is an adaptable species and makes a wide-spreading, symmetrical canopy. They are found in average to medium moisture with acidic, well-drained soils



but are quite tolerant of a wide range of soil conditions. When the weather allows, Shumard oaks have fairly decent fall color.

I can't believe I'm about to write this, but never did I ever think so many camouflaged items would reside in my home. Some folks plant to attract wildlife — whether for enjoyment or for supper — and the Nuttall oak is one of the best to plant for ducks and bucks. (Yes, I just rhymed game species.) Nuttall oaks are the most tolerant of poorly drained soils in the red oak group and drop acorns in December when wildlife need the most energy. They are prized by wild turkey as well, but that doesn't rhyme with ducks or bucks. Fauna aside, Nuttall push bronze new growth in spring and will form a symmetrical, somewhat pyramidal canopy around 30 feet across with good fall color given the right weather.

The bur oak makes the biggest statement out of those in our sale inventory. It's not an oak for space-shy gardens, but makes a real impact in Texas-sized landscapes. It has a broad, spreading crown that over time will provide the perfect cover for summer picnics. Bur oaks produce the largest acorn out of our native oaks, so probably best not to park a vehicle under it during seedfall. Bur oak are native to the Blackland Prairies of Texas, but are remarkably adaptable to

a wide range of soil types.

The American beech might be one my favorite trees, a close second to the Southern magnolia. This slow growing, long-living, majestic beauty will form a broad crown with uniquely horizontal branches. My favorite thing about these trees is the gorgeous, bright silvery-gray, smooth bark that persists throughout their lifespan. There is nothing quite as magical as coming across a mature specimen in the forest with its massive trunk lighting up dense shade with its brilliant bark. American beech have bright yellow fall color.

I wish black gum, or black tupelo, were more prevalent in landscapes. They are one of the best native trees for fall colors beyond yellow, including shades of red, orange and sometimes purple. Black gum offer a somewhat upright, pyramidal habit yet will provide a decent canopy for shade, reaching 20 to 30 feet across. They are tolerant of soil type and



American beeches, red oaks and other trees create a peaceful atmosphere in Pennsylvania's Susquehannock State Forest.  
*Photo by Nicholas A. Tonelli*

even grow well in wet, compacted soil types typical in urban settings. Black gum are popular with beekeepers as the honey produced from the flowers is high quality and uniquely flavored. They are closely related to the trees used in tupelo honey production. Trees are dioecious, meaning each tree will have either male or female flowers, but many produce a few perfect flowers, with both male and female structures, and in turn produce fruit that is highly prized by wildlife.

I hope you'll take the opportunity to plant a tree this fall, whether it is on your property or for a community project. Imagine how much shade we'd have in August if each one of us plants at least one tree. As the saying goes, "Trees are terrific!"



Trees create shade in the landscape and offer value through beautiful fall color and unique fruit that supports a variety of wildlife.

**Left:** American beech from Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. / *Photo by Katja Schulz* **Middle:** Bur oak acorn / *Photo by Matt Lavin.* **Right:** Black tupelo from Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C. / *Photo by Katja Schulz*



## Membership has its Privileges – Be a Friend

By Anne Sullivan

How quickly time flies. It must be fall because, once again, it's time for our annual SFA Gardens membership drive.

If you are reading this, you are most likely already a current SFA Gardens member. Thank you for your loyalty and support of what many consider to be Nacogdoches' best attraction. How lucky we are to live in a unique town with a wonderful university that offers beautiful gardens for the education and enjoyment of residents and visitors alike.

Watch your mailbox for the new Be A Friend membership brochure, including an updated, more secure credit card payment system for your convenience.

Again, thank you for your past support. SFA Gardens needs you and hopes you will continue as a member. Feel free to share this newsletter with any garden friends who might be interested in joining.

For more information on SFA Gardens membership, contact Anne Sullivan, program associate, at (936) 468-4129 or [sullivanfa@sfasu.edu](mailto:sullivanfa@sfasu.edu).

### Membership Benefits

- \* SFA Gardens News quarterly newsletter with enlightening and entertaining articles

- \* Garden seminar discounts

- \* At the \$250 level and above, admission to members-only Garden Gala and Fabulous Fall Festival Plant Sale presales

- \* Satisfaction of knowing your membership makes it possible for this garden adventure to continue and thrive



## Memorial Benches Available for Dedication

By Anne Sullivan



Located throughout the Pineywoods Native Plant Center, Ruby Mize and Gayla Mize Gardens, and Mast Arboretum, benches offer quiet resting places for visitors



to sit, read, take photographs, meditate, and enjoy the beauty of nature, wildlife and the changing seasons.

A variety of rugged wooden and sleek metal benches of different sizes, shapes and materials are strategically located throughout the four garden locations.



I love these benches and what they represent. Gardening friends or loved ones who have passed away can be honored with the purchase of one of these memorial benches. A special plaque with the person's name, date of dedication and the name of the donor



Memorial benches are available for dedication in SFA's gardens. Benches vary in style and location.



will be placed on the bench. This is a unique and thoughtful way to honor and remember important people in our lives, especially those who love gardening and the great outdoors.

Anyone interested in purchasing one of these memorial benches can contact Anne Sullivan, SFA Gardens program associate, for more information at (936) 468-4129 or [sullivanfa@sfasu.edu](mailto:sullivanfa@sfasu.edu).



## Tips and Tricks for Taking Better Smart Photos

By Dawn Stover

In our line of work, people are often asking us to identify a type of flower or tree they found in the woods. Many times, the descriptions folks give just aren't sufficient for us to decipher what the plant might actually be. I once received a call from a man wanting to know how to trim his "shrubbushes." One word. When I pressed him for a few more details — Do they bloom? Are the leaves big or small? Do they

lose their leaves? — I was met with, "You know, them there shrubbushes." Well, different shrubs require different pruning techniques, so I can only hope that I gave him the right advice.

Photography and the age of smartphones have become great assets. As far as identification, a visual aid goes a lot further than a vague description. However, sometimes the photos we see are as vague as the

verbal descriptions. Photos are blurry, or the subject is too far away. There's not enough detail in the photo, and oddly sometimes there are too many details. I'd say nine out of 10 times the photo is too blurry to be helpful.

There are some things you can do to help the plant professionals help you identify your mystery plant. So here's a quick guide on how to take good pictures of plants for identification.



**1** Get up close and personal. It's frustrating trying to identify a plant or tree from a distance. Yes, sometimes the tree's shape lends itself to identification, but not often, and not when growing next to other trees. Move in and get a more distinct photo of the individual plant.



**4** Focus, focus, focus. Once you get up close and personal, frame your subject, and then tap your screen on the part of the subject you need in focus. This is called assisted autofocus and works fairly well. In many situations where contrast is low between subject and background, assisted autofocus uses the background to focus, and this is contrary to the mission of focusing on the subject.



**2** Take several different photos. Take pictures of the leaves up close, how they are arranged on the stem, and the flowers and fruit/seed pods if there are any. If it's a tree, be sure to include a picture of the bark.



**5** Sit still. Don't take pictures from moving vehicles and then ask someone to identify the plant. If it's really something special and you want to know what it is, safely park your vehicle and repeat steps one through four. I have lots of experience with this, as I like to take photos of native flowers I find while driving through the country. My poor son, who is my most frequent passenger, has learned to quietly roll his eyes as I put on the blinker and brake. He sighs and mutters, "Mom's looking at plants again."



**3** Use your hands or another prop like the back of a shirt, notebook or a solid object and place it directly behind the subject. This adds a distinct contrast between your subject and the background. Tap the screen where you want to focus.

*I hope these tips are timely and help you to take better smartphone pictures in general, especially tip No. 4. There are many more tips to good photography, including framing, lighting, subject matter and such, but that's perhaps an article for the future.*



## Plant Sale Mania

By Dr. David Creech

A main goal of our plant sales is to introduce new plants to the area that have proven themselves in the garden but have yet to make their way into the trade. This list of plants is actually pretty long, but here is a sneak peek into a few of our favorite introductions.

### Ironwood

This year's plant sale will include *Parrotia subaequalis*, a Chinese ironwood that features striking red foliage. It will probably reach 10 to 20 feet within two or three decades, so it's a manageable multi-trunk, small deciduous tree.

The *Parrotia persica*, the Persian ironwood, is a bulletproof plant that features a butterscotch yellow fall show. Both develop great bark interest with time and both get better with age.

### Taxodium hybrids

We're excited to offer the best taxodium of the China-bred hybrids, T406, which we have named 'LaNana' (with permission from our friends at the Nanjing Botanical Garden). This clone is half bald and half Montezuma and features a fast growth rate, no knees, salt and alkalinity



*Illicium floridanum*,  
'Florence'



*Parrotia subaequalis*

tolerance, and a strong resistance to the *Cercosporidium* needle blight disease.

### 'Florence'

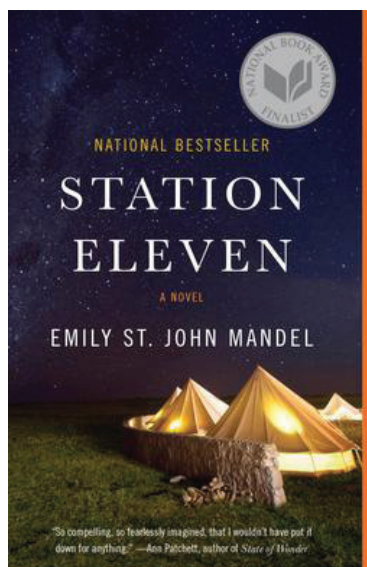
Finally, we are offering *Illicium floridanum* 'Florence,' an odd variegated anise shrub that sports ever-changing kinds of variegation but rarely reverts to green.

### Dawn's favorites

Dawn is working diligently to bring local ecotypes of native herbaceous plants to the mix, and in the process has brought some never-before-offered natives to the sale.

Her favorite is the downy lobelia, *Lobelia puberula*. It's a sturdy perennial that offers tall spires of blue flowers in time for the fall hummingbird migration. A close second is the tall blazing star, *Liatris aspera*. It offers unique button-shaped buds on tall bloom spikes that burst open to reveal frilly lavender-purple flowers

There are many others that have yet to enter commerce but are available at our plant sale. As we continue our efforts, we hope to keep working toward our never-ending goal of diversifying and improving the Gulf South landscapes.



## Connecting through Reading

By Jocelyn Moore

SFA Gardens is excited to partner with the Nacogdoches Judy B. McDonald Public Library's Big Read of 2018. The library was awarded a grant from the National Endowment of the Arts in order to "broaden our understanding of our world, our communities and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book," according to local librarian Crystal Hicks.

The library has distributed more than 2,000 copies of "Station 11" by Emily St. John Mandel. This book is a post-apocalyptic novel on the surface, but it

dives deeper into the power of human connection and the notion that "survival is insufficient." The library and more than a dozen partnering organizations will explore book themes throughout October.

On Oct. 13, the PNPC will host an Archery and Survival Supermarket to illustrate many of the survival skills discussed in the book. This free family day will include archery lessons, a discussion on how to use the cattail plant and guided plant identification hikes with National Association of Interpretation students.



# Upcoming Events

## SEPT. 21: KIWI FIELD DAY

Hear SFA Gardens Director Dr. David Creech, Tim Hartmann from Texas A&M University, David Anderson of Anderson Food Sales and Marketing, and Ross Stevenson, international kiwifruit grower, outline the economic aspects of kiwifruit production and opportunities for East Texas from 9 a.m. to noon at the PNPC. The conference costs \$25 (\$40 per couple) and includes lunch. To register, contact Dawn Stover, SFA Gardens research associate, at (936) 468-4404.



## SEPT. 22: WILDSCAPING FOR POLLINATORS

Explore the concepts of creating gardens for wildlife with a special focus on native pollinators with Dawn Stover, SFA Gardens research associate, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Brundrett Conservation Education Building. The seminar costs \$25 for SFA Gardens members and \$30 for non-members.



## OCT. 5-6: 300 YEARS OF PLANTS ON THE MOVE IN TEXAS

Join the Southern Garden History Society, along with SFA Gardens, Friends of Historic Nacogdoches and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service as they present 300 Years of Plants on the Move with tours, lectures, a book signing and reception at The Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center in celebration of Texas' tricentennial in gardening. Speakers include Jeff Abt, Dr. David Creech, Greg Grant and William C. Welch. For more information or a registration form, email fohni@yahoo.com.



## OCT. 6: FABULOUS FALL FESTIVAL PLANT SALE

Shop for hard-to-find, "Texas-tough" plants, including Texas natives, heirlooms, perennials, shrubs and trees with an emphasis on pollinator-friendly natives as well as SFA introductions. The sale runs from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the PNPC.



## OCT. 11: THERESA AND LES REEVES LECTURE SERIES

Listen to Andrew King of Texas A&M University explain why "You Can Take the Boy out of East Texas, but You Can't Take the Azaleas Out of His Garden: Growing Ornamentals in a Challenging Environment."



## OCT. 13: ARCHERY AND SURVIVAL SUPERMARKET FAMILY DAY

Participate in family-friendly archery lessons, orienteering instruction and outdoor cooking from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the PNPC. You also can learn about the traditional and survival uses of the cattail plant. National Association of Interpretation students will lead hikes with plant identification. Admission is free, but donations to SFA Gardens are always appreciated.



## NOV. 8: THERESA AND LES REEVES LECTURE SERIES

Hear SFA Gardens Director Dr. David Creech discuss "SFA Gardens, Where Good Ideas Meet Insurmountable Obstacles."



## NOV. 10: GIFTS FROM THE GARDEN — CREATING HERBAL SOAPS

Learn how to make soap using natural oils and herbs with Elyce Rodewald, SFA Gardens research associate and educational program coordinator, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Brundrett Conservation Education Building. The seminar costs \$25 for SFA Gardens members and \$30 for non-members.



## DEC. 13: THERESA AND LES REEVES LECTURE SERIES

Enjoy listening as Mark Weathington from the J.C. Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, North Carolina, elaborates on "Beyond Tire Planters: Gardening in the South."



The free lecture series events will begin at 7 p.m. in the Brundrett Conservation Education Building. A drawing for plants from SFA Gardens will follow.

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For more information, contact SFA Gardens at (936) 468-4129 or sfagardens@sfasu.edu.





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WITH US.

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STATE UNIVERSITY



*“To plant trees is to give body and life to one’s dreams of  
a better world.”*

– “The Education of a Gardener” by Russell Page

