

THE LEAFLET

Summer 2012



Published for the members and volunteers who generously support Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

“National Volunteer Week (April 15-21) embodies the energy and power volunteers evoke on a daily basis as they lead by example—not only encouraging the people they help, but motivating others to serve as well.”
—www.pointsoflight.org

Summer Symposium Plants That Thrive in Heat and Humidity

The 2012 Summer Symposium and Plant Sale provides a great opportunity for participants and volunteers to learn more about plant varieties that thrive in heat and humidity. The symposium and sale, scheduled **Saturday, July 28 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, features gardening experts who share their knowledge of plant selections and water conservation for the summer months.

Featured topics and speakers include:

- **Gingers and Heliconias:** David Glover, Tejas Tropicals
- **Ferns and Hoyas:** Mike Lowery, Another Place in Time
- **Plants for a Tropical Effect:** Gary Outenreath, Beaumont Botanical Gardens
- **Landscape Begonias:** Tom Keepin, Astro Branch of the Begonia Society

The day culminates in a tour of Mercer’s own tropical-looking plants with Director Darrin Duling and the day’s speakers. According to Duling, “Many plants that love the heat and humidity are dormant in the winter but thrive during the hottest days of the year.” As you know, many of your begonias, gingers, and other tropical-looking



plants are bursting into color during the hottest period of mid-summer.

Begonias, long grown as summer annuals, aren’t just for a garden’s front border: they’re perfect in many areas of the garden. With succulent stems and stunning bloom spikes, rhizomatous varieties work well in dry locations with partial shade. Duling also offers that “their colorful and shapely leaves add a unique texture to gardens.”

Consider volunteering for the 2012 Summer Symposium and Plant Sale: Plants That Thrive in Heat and Humidity. Volunteers are needed to help with plant sales check-out, greeting and checking in participants, and setting up and serving refreshments. Volunteers who assist attend the symposium for free, shop before the sale opens to the public, and earn Master Gardener credits.

See SUMMER SYMPOSIUM on page 6



Garden Faire at Mercer

Fun for All Ages

Enjoy a fun-filled day at Mercer's annual Garden Faire, shopping for plants and other unique home and garden goodies while visiting with garden experts. This two-day event will be held **Saturday and Sunday, September 22 and 23 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

The Garden Faire takes place on the west side of Mercer under the canopy of the wooded trails at the picnic area and will include over 50 vendor booths, with activities for all ages. You and your kids can adopt a rescue dog, take a train ride with Stan the Train Man, get your face painted, learn to grow seeds, and make amazing paper hats. Food and refreshments will be available for purchase.



This sixth-annual event attracts more than 3,000 people and is staffed by 150 volunteers from organizations including the First Baptist Christian Academy in Pasadena, H-E-B, Mercer, the National Charity League, and ROTC students from Cy-Creek, Nimitz, and Spring high schools.

To volunteer for this event, please e-mail Suzanne Chapman at schapman@hcp4.net or call 281.443.8731. Volunteer shifts are 8 a.m. to noon, noon to 4 p.m., or all day Saturday and/or Sunday.

Artists and vendors may inquire at msociety@hcp4.net or call Carol Knepp at 281.443.8731 for details.

An Evening in Paradise

Mercer Garden Party and Auction

Dine under the stars and take advantage of this rare opportunity to experience a magical moonlit night in the garden at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens' 6th Annual Garden Party and Auction scheduled for **Saturday, May 5 at 6 p.m.** Put on your posh tropical cocktail attire for an evening of delicious food, soft music, and luxuriant gardens.

Guests begin the evening at a reception that is followed by a catered dinner, raffle, and live auction. The fund-raiser, which benefits the gardens and programs at Mercer, also features a silent auction with a host of garden treasures. Tickets are \$75 (individual) and \$125 (couple). Major table sponsors receive an extra surprise. Call 281.443.8731 to make reservations.

Volunteers are always appreciated at this fun party event. Help with setup on Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., and/or during the evening event from 5 p.m. until conclusion around 10 p.m. Contact Suzanne Chapman at schapman@hcp4.net for details.



Summer Programs

May

Garden Party and Auction

Saturday, May 5 at 6 p.m.

See AN EVENING IN PARADISE on page 2 for details.

Lunch Bunch:

Native Trees and the Wildlife They Support

Wednesday, May 9 from noon to 2 p.m.

Anita Howlett, a staff naturalist from Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center, explores how tree and shrub diversity shapes wildlife populations.*

Bromeliad Society of Houston

Annual Show and Sale

Friday May 18 through Sunday, May 20

Learn about these colorful and drought-tolerant plants at the bromeliad show in Mercer's visitor center Saturday, May 19 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, May 20 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Then, take home a plant or two at the sale under the staff building Friday, May 18 from noon to 4 p.m., Saturday, May 19 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, May 20 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call Mercer for details.

June

NEW: Cultivation of Your Outdoor Palette

–Painting Nature with Watercolor Pencils

Saturdays, June 9, 16, and 23 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Attend a three-session beginners watercolor pencils painting course. The fee is \$65 for members of The Mercer Society and \$75 for nonmembers, and includes an artist's starter kit with watercolor paper, a set of 12 watercolor pencils, a brush set, charcoal pencils, and a drawing board. Reservations are required by calling 281.443.8731.

Lunch Bunch: Beneficial Insects

Wednesday, June 13 from noon to 2 p.m.

Skip Richter, a Harris County AgriLife extension agent, offers tips on identifying and attracting beneficial insects to your garden.*

July

Lunch Bunch: Earth-Kind Landscapes

Wednesday, July 11 from noon to 2 p.m.

Carol Brouwer, a former Harris County extension agent, shares research-proven techniques for preserving and protecting the environment. Discussion topics also include water conservation, pesticide usage, and waste.*

Texas Rose Rustlers Meeting

Saturday, July 14 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join Gaye Hammond, former president of the Houston Rose Society, for a presentation on the history of the rose in the United States. Call Mercer for details.

*Reservations are required by calling 281.443.8731. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy learning important information at Lunch Bunch each month. The lunch bunch programs of May through August, and the Summer Symposium, carry an added bonus for Harris County and Montgomery County Master Gardeners seeking CEU hours: These educational programs qualify as continuing education toward your certification.

See SUMMER PROGRAMS on page 7



Celebrating People in Action

2011 Volunteers

Mercer extends a huge thank you to the 218 volunteers who contributed over 24,000 volunteer hours in 2011! Thousands of visitors see the results of the efforts put forth by volunteers at Mercer every year.

Mercer hosted its annual volunteer luncheon on April 18, during National Volunteer Week, as a small gesture of appreciation for the hard work accomplished by so many dedicated people throughout the year. The following volunteers were honored at the luncheon for their time and dedication:

1-49 Hours

Martin Adams
Felipa Aguilar
Chelsea Anderson
Sandy Andorka**
Ann Bandy
Debbie Banfield
Charles Barnes
Buddy Barziza (1929-2012)
Chuck Bennett
Linda Blackwell
Laura Blevins*
Gail Boren**
Molly Borromeo
Jennifer Boyd
Michael Boyd*
Martha Burg
Jason Burow
Kendall Calelly
Jane Campbell
Sally Canovas
Jeff Carron
Kimberly Carron
Steve Carter
Linda Cobb
Kitten Collins
Lynne Danchak
Peggy Davis
Freida DeWeese
Phung Do
Giang Doan
Kathleen Dovenon
Ceil Dow
Kitty Duckett
Lauren Dyer
Claudia Flach
Joyce Funderburk
Pamela Gardner
Susan Gardner
Allison Graham
Ashley Graham

Ellen Hampton
Janet Hampton
Nellene Harvey
Anne Hayden
Steve Hebert
Cailen Hollins
Lisa Hollins
Taylor Hood
Kathy Hyatt
Mary Jackson
Lesley Kauffman
Annette Kelly
Alice Kingsbery*
Melitta Kirksey
Carol Kobb
Harold Kron
Lydia Lafferty
Kathy Lane
MyLinh Laud
Donna Lexow
Gil Long
Mary Jane Maiers
Jim Mangone*
Edward Marks
Irene Marks
Martha Matiuk**
Donna May*
Allen Mazany
John McFarlane
Patricia McGee
Ashley McGinnis
Melissa McGinnis
Tonimarie McGlynn-Long
Allyson Mickey
Bill Millar*
Melanie Mohler**
Yolanda Mullins
Jere Noerager
Suzanne Noerager**
Marcia Patrick
Pamela Patrick

Debra Paul
Linda Payne
Debbie Peters
Alexandra Petropoulos
Bill Petterson
Jerry Pierson
Susan Pierson*
Diane Plante
Dan Podkulski
Carol Powers
Chuck Psajdl
Paula Purcell
Michael Rash
Susan Rash
Alan Raymond
Kathy Reed
Regina Ripley
Robert Robertson
John Ross
Mary Rossiter*
David Salazar
Jean Scates*
Bernadette Session
Ivana Shumberg
Elizabeth Simmons
Fukumi Smith
Geraldine Smith
Peggy Sorenson
Daria Stellwag
Delores Stringer
Jessica Stringer
Nancy Svoboda
Lee Ann Thierry
Liz Tindol
Mary Valerio*
Diana White
Louis Winkler
Cindy Yandell
Jackie Yarotsky
Ali Zvada

50-99 Hours

Ellen Alfar**
Judy Banning**
Judy Bass
Carol Bell
Charles Carlin
Barbara Carter
Cristina Carvajal
Karen Chapman
William Chapman
Enell Cooper
Dona Curren
Georgiann Ditrich
Carolyn Engelbrink
Jeff England
Sandra Evans**
Nancy Ewald*
Alyson Frisch
Willadene Graves
Jane Gregory
Jacqui Hazelwood
Jacintha Hergarden
Judy Herman-Hees*
Karen Hood
Mei-Ying Hoppie
Patricia Howard
Mary Ann Kaminski
Chick Klepadlo
Binky Lester
Ginger Lovell
Zaragoza Maldonado
Shelli Marshall
Shearon Millar
Irma Ojeda
Dani Palmieri*
Christy Pepper
Merle Reynolds
Janet Roberts*
Dennis Samoska
Carol Scaper

See VOLUNTEERS on page 5



VOLUNTEERS *(continued from page 4)*



Gordon White (volunteer for over 15 years) and Suzanne Chapman (volunteer coordinator)

Harry Sharp**
Vickie Snyder
Anna Swinderman
Maggie Von Rump
Frances Walker
Lauren Westbrook
Donald Whitaker
Connie Williams**
Janet Winkler

100-199 Hours

Carol Bennett**
Betty Boyland
Lynette Calfee
Barbara Davidson
Becky Day
Cynthia Douglas**
Helen Dowling
Don DuBois
Douglas Gleason
Olwynne Gleason
Rick Halaska
Elena Harriman*
Christine Harrison
Jean Heineman
Carol Hellwig
Ann Johns
Linda Mathews
Rachel Mejorada
Diana Moyes
Shelley Munger
Carol Organ
Mary Helen Pritchett
Brooke Rodriguez
David Smathers

Flora Tiedt
Cherie Vanis
Debbie Welshimer**
Gordon White**
Carl Yung

200-299 Hours

Ernest Alphin
Barbara Ashburn
Peggy Block
Ginger Boswell
Sherry Cruse**
YC Loh
Will Ed Mathews
Betty Mooney
Joyce Nelsen
Judi Redilla**
Cristina Soto
Sue Sparkman
Matt Strommer
Robyn Sutton
Boni Wallen

300-399 Hours

Bill Harriman
Phyllis McFarlane

Long-Term Volunteers

Volunteers are often here for the long haul. Mercer enjoys the friendships of the many wonderful people that grow with the gardens.

*Volunteers with more than 5 years of service

**Volunteers with more than 10 years of service

Thank you, Gordon White, for dedicating over 15 years of service!

400-499 Hours

Dave Berkshire
Mary Ellen Brown
Mary Gonzalez
Betsy Hunter**
Darnell Schreiber

500-699 Hours

Charlyn Brown
Kitt Burnsides

Over 700 Hours

Diane Flynn
Anne Strommer

Diane Flynn recorded the most volunteer hours in 2011: 1,267 hours. Thank you Diane!

The Mercer Society

Mercer is grateful for the continued support of its nonprofit organization that also enables events in support of the volunteer corps.

The Mercer Society Board of Directors:

Carol Bennett
Virginia Blake
Lynette Calfee
Jake Elliott
John Ferguson

Diane Flynn
Betsy Hunter
Will Ed Mathews
Joyce Nelsen

Community Groups

Church of Jesus Christ Latter Day Saints Missionaries, ExxonMobil, Heartwood Chapter Master Naturalists, H-E-B, National Charity League, Yes Prep North Forest High School, Lane School - Aldine I.S.D., Spring I.S.D. students and job coaches Rhonda Crampton and Reshae Walker, Spring High School NJROTC, Nimitz High School NJROTC, CyCreek High School NJROTC, Wunsche High School, Houston Community College, Boy Scouts of America Troop 262, and Kingwood Garden Club.



SUMMER SYMPOSIUM *(continued from page 1)*

The fee for the symposium is \$70 for members of The Mercer Society and \$85 for nonmembers, with lunch provided. Registered participants will be able to enter the sale at 8 a.m., before the sale opens to the general public at 9 a.m. There will also be breaks between speakers for additional shopping during the day. A plant-holding area is provided for symposium participants.

Space is limited and paid registration is required by **Monday, July 16**. For more information on the symposium, volunteering, or registration, call 281.443.8731. The symposium sold out last year, so don't wait to register for this event!



Make Way for Native Plants!

Mercer's Endangered Species and Wildscape Garden is expanding, in size and sponsors! As volunteers help widen the garden, sponsors for additional endangered species are coming forward. I am happy to announce that Mercer received a charter donation from Cherry Hartig for one of the rarest local native plants: Texas Windmill Grass (*Chloris texensis*). Texas Windmill Grass is an endemic prairie species found in less than 20 sites on the Gulf Coastal Plain and is found nowhere else in the world. Invasive species and loss of habitat continue to threaten Texas Windmill Grass. On display in Mercer's Endangered Species and Wildscape Garden, this rare perennial grass displays windmill-shaped, flowering branches in the fall.

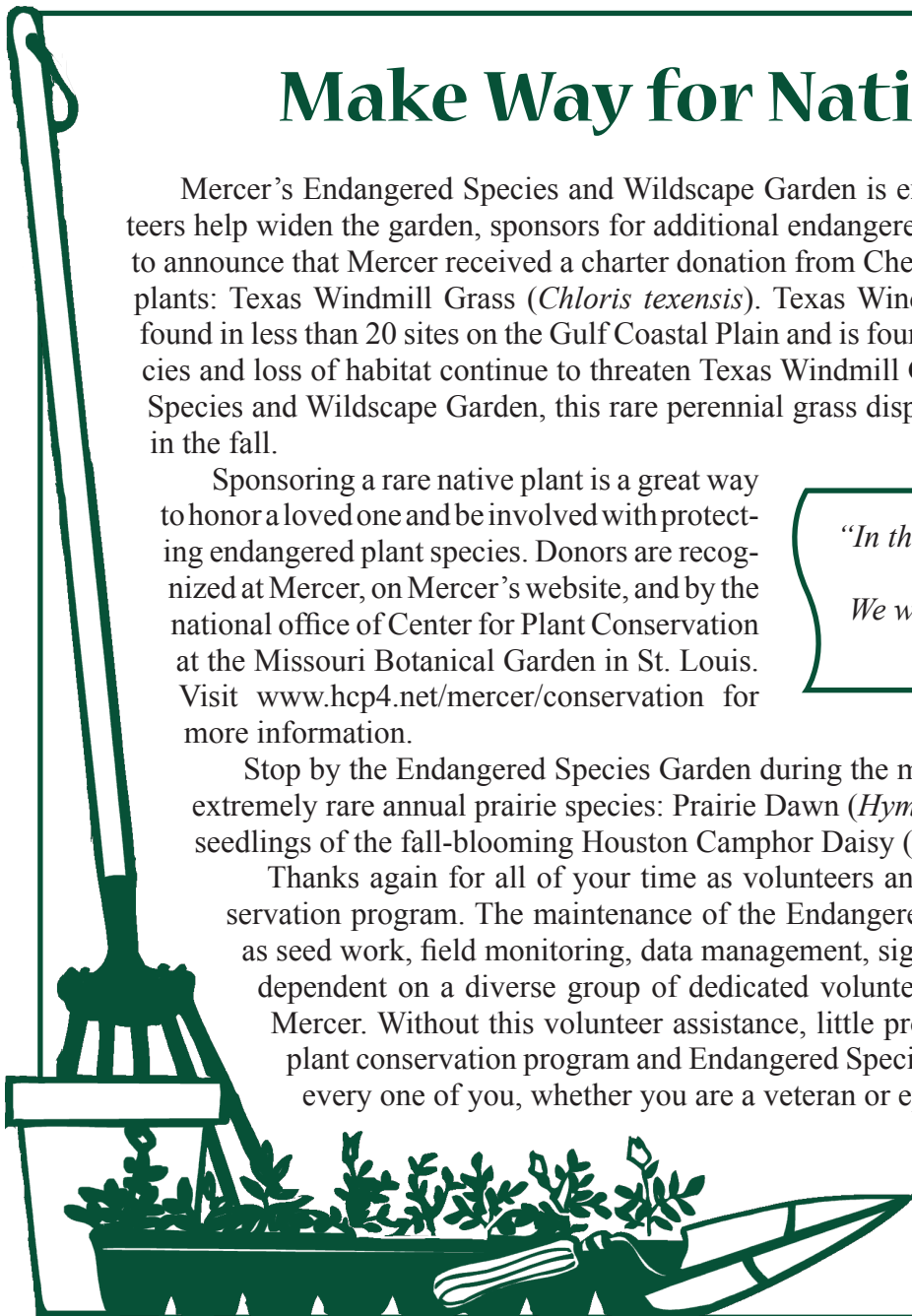
Sponsoring a rare native plant is a great way to honor a loved one and be involved with protecting endangered plant species. Donors are recognized at Mercer, on Mercer's website, and by the national office of Center for Plant Conservation at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis. Visit www.hcp4.net/mercer/conservation for more information.

*"In the end we will conserve only what we love.
We love only what we understand.
We will understand only what we are taught."
—Baba Dioum, Senegalese environmentalist*

Stop by the Endangered Species Garden during the month of April and check out two local and extremely rare annual prairie species: Prairie Dawn (*Hymenoxys texana*) is in full bloom and robust seedlings of the fall-blooming Houston Camphor Daisy (*Rayjacksonia aurea*) are popping up.

Thanks again for all of your time as volunteers and for your support of Mercer's plant conservation program. The maintenance of the Endangered Species and Wildscape Garden, as well as seed work, field monitoring, data management, sign production, and other crucial chores, are dependent on a diverse group of dedicated volunteers that donate many hours each week to Mercer. Without this volunteer assistance, little progress would be made by Mercer's native plant conservation program and Endangered Species and Wildscape Garden. I thank each and every one of you, whether you are a veteran or episodic volunteer!

—Anita Tiller, Botanist



SUMMER PROGRAMS *(continued from page 3)*

July

(Continued)

NEW: Environmental Experiences and Growing Up Wild: Lessons for Early Childhood Teachers

Friday, July 20 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Project Learning Tree and Project Wild lead this joint workshop. The fee is \$35/person and class size is limited to 25. Reservations are required by calling 281.443.8731.

Summer Symposium and Plant Sale

Saturday, July 28 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Learn about the plant varieties that thrive in extreme heat and humidity from gardening experts.*

August

Lunch Bunch: Native Plant Conservation

Wednesday, August 8 from noon to 2 p.m.

Mercer Botanist Anita Tiller presents information on protecting and preserving wild places and what individuals can do to make a difference.*

Ongoing

Children's Story Time in the Garden

Third Monday of the month
from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Librarian Leanne Connery shares some of her favorite nature books and a craft.

May 21: *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss

June 18: *Growing Colors* by Bruce McMillan

July 16: *In the Tall Tall Grass* by Denise Fleming

August 20: *Clara Caterpillar* by Pamela Edwards

Chrysanthemum Society

Fourth Friday of most months
from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Learn about cultivation and floral arranging.

Cypress Creek Daylily Society

Fourth Sunday of most months
from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Join the group in learning about gardening with daylilies. **No meetings May through August.**

NEW: T'ai Chi for Arthritis

Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Join this free beginners class. T'ai chi can relieve stress, pain from arthritis and fibromyalgia, and improve balance.

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Precinct 4 Park System

Bane Park

9600 W. Little York—713.896.1468

Bayer Park

24811 W. Hardy Road
281.353.0518

Burroughs Park

9738 Hufsmith—281.351.1378

Collins Park

6727 Cypresswood Dr.
281.370.7602

Doss Park

2500 Frick Road—281.445.8664

Dyess Park

16822 Kitzman Road—281.351.7115

Fritsche Park

10603 Fritsche Cemetery Road

Independence Park

5515 Clara Road—713.896.1880

**Jesse H. Jones Park
& Nature Center**

20634 Kenswick Drive
281.446.8588
www.hcp4.net/jones

Klein Park

4531 Spring Cypress Road
281.353.0122

**Lindsay/Lyons Park
and Sports Complex**

2310 Atascocita Road—281.454.5326

Matthews Park

1728 Hufsmith Road—281.351.8815

Matzke Park

13207 Copeland Road

May Park

2100 Wolf Road—281.324.1294

Meyer Park

7700 Cypresswood Drive
281.376.6202

Pundt Park

4129 Spring Creek Drive

Southwell Park

27419 Nelson Street—281.350.2481

Spring Creek Park

15012 Brown Road—281.351.1243

Turkey Creek Park (undeveloped)

Broze Road

For Harris County Precinct 4 park information,
call 281.353.4196 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

22306 Aldine Westfield Road
Humble, Texas 77338-1071
281.443.8731
281.209.9767 fax
www.hcp4.net/mercer

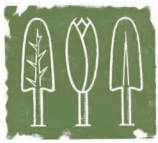
Mercer is open daily from
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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and preferred e-mail address.

Printing of *The Leaflet* is funded
by The Mercer Society.



R. Jack Cagle, Commissioner



Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens
22306 Aldine Westfield Road
Humble, Texas 77338-1071

1974 to 2012

38 years and still growing.

Thanks for your help.

E-mail: mercerarboretum@hcp4.net

Website: www.hcp4.net/mercer

Is your membership current?