



# NATIONAL WILDFLOWER RESEARCH CENTER

May/June 1996

Volume 13, Number 3

## Hummin' Into Spring!

F. M. Oxley

Sr. Botanist / Ed. Programs Manager

Hummingbirds are, without a doubt, some of the most fascinating birds in the world. We are enchanted by their iridescent beauty, amazed at how fast they must beat their wings to stay aloft, and marvel at the amount of food it takes to power these tiny flying machines. So, what can you do to attract hummers to your garden?

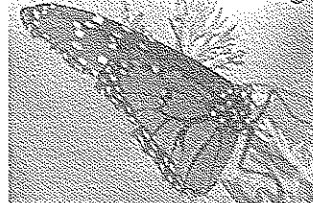
Any wildlife garden must provide the basics: food, shelter, and water. Hummingbird gardens are no different.

A good place to start is with the right kinds of plants. Hummingbirds are attracted to plants with red flowers. Species such as columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), and trumpet flower (*Campsis radicans*) produce bright red or red-orange flowers hummingbirds love to visit. They also produce tubular-shaped flowers (just the right shape to accommodate the long beaks of hummingbirds) as well as lots of sweet nectar for hummers to sip.

Other nectar sources include Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), beebalm (*Monarda didyma*), and autumn sage (*Salvia greggii*).

Clean water, a safe place to raise young, and appropriate food plants will make your garden a hummingbird haven.

## Butterflies & Hummingbirds



### Focus of Speaker's Series

The Wildflower Center's Speaker's Series continues with two excellent programs: butterfly expert Dr. Robert Michael Pyle May 8, and authors Robert and Esther Tyrrell June 5.

Dr. Robert Michael Pyle is author of the best-selling *Handbook for Butterfly Watchers* and the *National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies*. He is the founder of the Xerces Society, an international organization dedicated to insect habitat protection.

Robert Tyrrell is regarded as the world's foremost photographer of hummingbirds, and his wife, Esther, puts words to his images. The Tyrrell's co-authored the best-selling *Hummingbirds: Their Life and Behavior*, and their book, *Hummingbirds: Jewels in the Sky*, was selected as one of the top 100 children's books by the Library of Congress.

Both lectures start at 7 p.m. in the Center's Auditorium. Admission is \$5 for members and \$7 for non-members. For information, call (512) 292-4200.

## Blooms Beget Butterflies

F. M. Oxley

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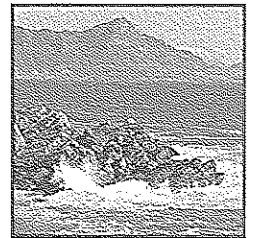
Something about butterflies captures our imaginations. They resemble tiny fairies as they flutter about the garden from flower to flower, sipping nectar. The beautiful motes of color add such a wonderful dimension to any garden. And, we all want them to make our yard their home. So, what's the secret of attracting butterflies?

In addition to water and shelter, two types of plants must be available in any butterfly garden: food plants for the

*continued on p. 5*

## SOUTH AFRICA AWAITS!

There's still time to join the Wildflower Center's exclusive insider's tour of the Cape Province of South Africa, one of the world's significant floral regions. The tour takes place August 25 to September 7, with an optional extension to the Mala Mala Game Reserve September 8 - 12. For a detailed itinerary, call Mae Daniller at (512) 292-4200.



## Creating a New Land Ethic

Previous land-use ethics were based on the assumption that this continent had inexhaustible natural resources and so many vast wilderness areas we would never have to worry about losing them. That attitude is being replaced by an acute awareness of the increasing loss of wilderness and biodiversity as well as seriously escalating water shortages.

Almost 10 percent of the flora native to North America is threatened with extinction. However, the reasons for this threat, as well as the causes of chemical pollution from our lawns and gardens, the diminishing numbers of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife,

and many related problems, are now being understood by more and more average citizens. And so are the solutions. Today we are less willing to blandly accept and imitate what, for so long, has been considered elegant and exotic in European gardening. We are developing a healthy national and regional pride in our own natural and native beauty. A new land ethic is forming around us.

You are among the many thousands already aware of this changing attitude and the many benefits of using native plants in planned landscapes. These are very real and very compelling benefits, and the use of native

plants in planned landscapes continues to be a major part of the new, solution-oriented land ethic. There has been a dramatic increase not only in wildflower and native plant enthusiasts, but in reference materials, native plant stock and seed, and successful examples of established native plant landscapes.

By the turn of this century, the concept of using regional native

*continued on p. 6*



*David K. Northington, Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Wildflower Center*

*The National Wildflower Research Center is a nonprofit research and educational organization committed to the preservation and reestablishment of native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, trees, and vines in planned landscapes.*

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## Wildflower Wish List

The Wildflower Center has many needs its budget cannot allow. These items will enable us to provide better service to our growing membership:

- 1/2 or 3/4 ton pick-up truck
- VCR and 19-inch or larger color TV
- Minolta Maxxum AF camera lenses
- Several 486 or Pentium PC's
- Chain saw
- Wheelchairs

We ask that these items be new or gently used. If you would like to donate, please contact Mae Daniller, Development Director, at (512) 292-4200.

## WILDFLOWER CENTER NEWS! NEWS! NEWS!

The *House Beautiful* article many of you looked for in February was published in the April issue – we hope it was worth the wait!

The Wildflower Center construction project by Bartlett Cocke/Austin Commercial, joint venture, won the coveted National Eagle Award in "Excellence in Construction" sponsored by the Associated Builders and Contractors.

When you enjoy a meal at the Wildflower Cafe, take a look around. Maline McCalla, Maggie Flannery, and Johnny Ramirez are responsible for the hand-painted wildflower chairs and the "painted carpet" on the floor.

The Wildflower Center is the perfect place to spend Mother's Day, May 12. Stroll the gardens, take photos among hundreds of flowers, enjoy a light lunch -- it's a mother's dream. Plus, all mothers receive free admission!

Father's are not neglected, and not only receive free admission to the Wildflower Center on Father's Day (June 16), but can hum their way into history in the Center's first "kazoo kontest."

# Making a Difference: Wildflower Patrons

## Wildflower Patrons Council

*The Wildflower Patrons Council was established to recognize the importance of corporate and foundation operating support, which enables the Wildflower Center to conduct many essential programs. Corporations and businesses are offered special benefits to encourage employee involvement and appreciation of native flora. For more information about the Wildflower Patrons Council, contact Mae Daniller, Development Director at (512) 292-4200.*

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*Every effort has been made to acknowledge donors accurately. We regret any errors or omissions. For inquiries or corrections, please contact the Development Office at (512) 292-4200.*

*Each year we are delighted to recognize our **Wildflower Patrons**. These special friends provide substantial support for the Center's education programs and outreach efforts, and participate in special activities designed to heighten their involvement and awareness of our programs and mission. For information about the Wildflower Patrons program, contact the Development Office at (512) 292-4200.*

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# Wildflower

## NOTEBOOK

### Butterfly Flowers

**Botanical Name:** *Passiflora* spp.  
**Pronunciation:** Pa-si-FLO-ra  
**Common Name:** Passionflower  
**Family:** Passifloraceae  
(Passionflower Family)  
**Range:** Florida to Texas, north to Missouri

The passionflower was named by Jesuit missionaries, who interpreted the flower parts as symbols of various aspects of the crucifixion.



Campbell & Lynn Loughmiller

**Botanical Name:** *Asclepias tuberosa*  
**Pronunciation:** A-SKLAY-pee-as  
tew-be-RO-sa  
**Common Name:** Butterfly weed  
**Family:** Asclepiadaceae  
(Milkweed Family)  
**Range:** Rhode Island to North Dakota, south to Arizona  
Butterfly weed root is used to treat asthma and bronchitis and relieve swelling and bruises.



Lynn Lowrey

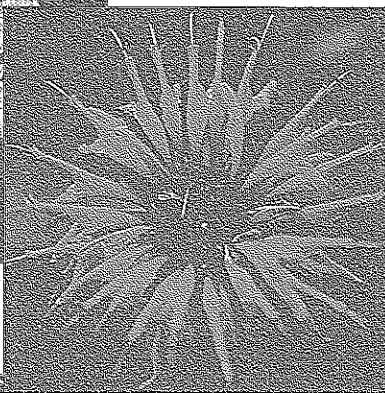
**Botanical Name:** *Eupatorium fistulosum*  
**Pronunciation:** Ew-pa-TO-ree-um  
fis-tew-LO-sum  
**Common Name:** Hollow Joe-Pye weed  
**Family:** Asteraceae  
(Sunflower Family)  
**Range:** Quebec to Florida, west to Texas and Oklahoma  
This hollow-stemmed species was used by Native Americans as a blowgun.



William Bransford

### Hummingbird Flowers

**Botanical Name:** *Monarda didyma*  
**Pronunciation:** Mo-NAR-da  
DI-di-ma  
**Common Name:** Beebalm  
**Family:** Lamiaceae (Mint Family)  
**Range:** Eastern North America  
Oswego Indians used beebalm leaves to make a tea for treating chills and fever.



William Bransford

**Botanical Name:** *Aquilegia canadensis*  
**Pronunciation:** A-kwi-LEE-gee-a  
kan-a-DEN-sis  
**Common Name:** Columbine  
**Family:** Ranunculaceae  
(Crowfoot Family)  
**Range:** Eastern North America  
The genus name is from the Latin word for eagle, *aquila*, and refers to the talon-like flower spurs.



William Bransford

**Botanical Name:** *Lobelia cardinalis*  
**Pronunciation:** Lo-BEL-ee-a  
kar-di-NAH-lis  
**Common Name:** Cardinal flower  
**Family:** Campanulaceae  
(Bluebell Family)  
**Range:** Southeastern Canada to Florida, west to California  
Cardinal flower received its common name when the queen of England said it reminded her of a cardinal's scarlet stocking.



Doug Sherman





# Wildflower Serenade



Mark your calendar now for the Wildflower

Center's 1996 Wildflower Serenade concerts. The spacious Courtyard is the stage for Sunday evening shows June 9, August 11, and October 13. Bring your picnics, blankets, and lawn chairs for these enchanted evenings of music under the stars. Call the Special Events Office at (512) 292-4200 for information.

## Butterflies

from p. 1

larvae (caterpillars) and nectar plants for the adults. Grow both types together so you can have butterflies in your garden throughout their entire life cycle

## Larval Food Plants

Butterfly larvae eat plant foliage. Some larvae are very picky eaters, preferring the foliage of one kind of plant, while others feed on a smorgasbord of different plants.

Plant a variety of species, including trees, shrubs, and vines, to appeal to the appetites of many different butterflies. Willow (*Salix* spp.), elm (*Ulmus* spp.), spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), flame acanthus (*Anisacanthus wrightii*), and passionflower (*Passiflora* spp.) are excellent larval plant foods. Cenizo (*Leucophyllum frutescens*) and milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) are also good sources of nutrition for the youngsters.

## Nectar Plants

While larvae prefer to feed on foliage, adults rely on nectar as their primary food source. Flowers that produce lots of nectar are essential to attract adult butterflies. Species such as buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), mistflower (*Eupatorium coelestinum*), wild onion (*Allium* spp.), and hollow Joe-Pye weed (*Eupatorium fistulosum*) are just a few of the many good nectar sources available.

Although quite dainty, butterflies are just a little lazy and like to sit as they sip

# F + E L D

*From the*

## New England

Jamaica Plain, MA: *Native Shrubs for Landscape Use*, June 19, Contact: Pam Thompson, The Arnold Arboretum, 125 Arbor Way, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, (617) 524-1718 ext. 162.

## Northeast

Washington Crossing, PA: *Flowering Shrubs*, May 25, Contact: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, Box 103, Washington Crossing, PA 18977, (215) 862-2924.

Washington Crossing, PA: *Native Plants in the Landscape Conference*, June 13-15, Contact: Office of Continuing Education, Millersville University, Box 1002, Millersville, PA 17551, (717) 872-3030.

## Atlantic Coast

Norfolk, VA: *Sunday Walking Tours*, May 12 & June 9, Contact: Norfolk Botanical Garden, Azalea Garden Rd., Norfolk, VA 23518, (804) 441-5839.

## Southeast

Baton Rouge, LA: *Gulf Coast Regional Native Plant Conference*, June 12-15, Contact: Hilltop Arboretum, Box 82608, Baton Rouge, LA 70884, (504) 767-6916.

## Oklahoma/Texas

McAlester, OK: *19th Annual Wildflower Workshop*, May 10-11, Contact: Beautification Office, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, 200 N. E. 21st St., Oklahoma City, OK 73105, (405) 521-4037.

## Midwest

Cape Girardeau, MO: *Illinois and Missouri Native Plant Societies Joint Meeting*, May 31-June 2, Contact: Larry Morrison, 110 Virginia Avenue, O'Fallon, IL 62269, (618) 624-5964.

## West

Kalispell, MT: *Native Flora of Glacier*, June 21-22, Contact: The Glacier Institute, Box 7457, Kalispell, MT 59904, (406) 755-1211.

Marias Pass, MT: *Montana Native Plant Society Annual Meeting*, June 28-30, Contact: Montana Native Plant Society, Box 777, Bigfork, MT 59911, (406) 994-6618.

## California

San Francisco, CA: *San Bruno Mountain Wildflower Walk*, May 11, Contact: Ken Himes, California Native Plant Society, (415) 591-8560.

Woodside, CA: *Skyline Wildflower Hike*, May 26, Contact: Ellie Gioumoustis, California Native Plant Society, (415) 494-6276.

## Northwest

Portland, OR: *Wildflower Walks*, May 4 & May 18, Contact: Hoyt Arboretum, 4000 SW Fairview Blvd., Portland, OR 97221, (503) 228-8733.

their nectar. Flowers that provide a "platform" for them to rest on as they dine are also desirable. Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), Indian blanket (*Gaillardia pulchella*), sunflowers (*Helianthus* spp.), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), lantana (*Lantana horrida*), and goldenrods (*Solidago* spp.) provide just the "right spot" for a morning or afternoon nectar break.

Other factors that play a role in a butterfly's choice of flowers include color, fragrance, and the presence (or absence) of nectar guides (markings on a flower that

direct the butterfly to the nectar). Because butterflies "see" in the full spectrum of color, they will visit many different colored flowers, including purple, white, yellow, and pink. Flowers with strong fragrances will be more attractive and visited more often than those with little or no scent, and flowers with nectar guides will be visited before those without guides.

If you build the right kind of environment, providing water, shelter, and the right kind of food, butterflies will come to your garden. It's no secret, it just takes a little imagination.

## Director's Report

from p.2

wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, vines, and trees in our home and commercial landscapes will have "turned the corner." It will no longer be thought of as an interesting but esoteric notion, appealing to a select audience. Actually, in some areas of the country and with some audiences, this has already happened.

Moreover, I believe using native plants will become common practice during the first decade of the 21st century, and the norm during the second decade. I am comfortable predicting that well before the middle of the next century it will be the consumptive, non-native landscape that is rare — possibly seen only as museum-like exhibits, reminders of an historic, but obsolete, wasteful past.

It took more than two centuries to establish our current practices of resource-wasting, homogeneous, and poorly

adapted North American gardens. Why, then, do I think it will take less than a half century to replace such an ingrained way of landscaping? Primarily because the impetus for change will be much more urgent. Water shortages, which already affect a major portion of North America, will increase the cost of this precious resource, making today's conventional landscapes not only financially impractical, but possibly unethical. Combined with our species' natural inclination to personally experience and observe nature's beauty, grandeur, and serenity, efforts must be expanded to ensure the continuation of our natural heritage. Becoming a native plant gardener or joining an organization like the Wildflower Center is not only fun, it is part of an important and permanent new land ethic for current and future generations.

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## Member's Notebook

Plants native to Wisconsin create a beautiful palette of color in this wildflower meadow planted by Don and Eileen Herrling, Wildflower Center members from Appleton, Wisconsin. The National Wildlife Federation has listed their meadow as a Backyard Wildlife Habitat. At last count, Eileen recorded more than 130 species of native plants.



Eileen Herrling

### THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE!

The Wildflower Center's special introductory rate of \$25 for an annual visiting family membership is rising to \$35. Individual memberships will remain \$25, and additional benefits are available for membership levels of \$60 and above. For more information, or to renew your membership at the old rates through the end of May, contact the Membership Office at (512) 292-4200.




NATIONAL WILDFLOWER RESEARCH CENTER  
4801 LA CROSSE AVENUE, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78739

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- ✿ *Wild Ideas: The Store*, call (512) 292-4300
- ✿ General Information, call (512) 292-4100

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