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New Sign is Installed in the Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration Garden

The new permanent sign now welcomes visitors to the Pineywoods Native Plant Center with sentiments from Lady Bird Johnson:

“Beauty in nature nourishes us and brings joy to the human spirit; it is also one of the deep needs of people everywhere.

“My hope for what lies ahead in the field of landscape design...is not a revolution against the use of non-natives, but a resolution to educate ourselves about what has worked for Mother Nature through the ebb and flow of time, and to put that knowledge to work in the planned landscapes that are everywhere a part of our lives.”



George and Faye Young Foundation Support

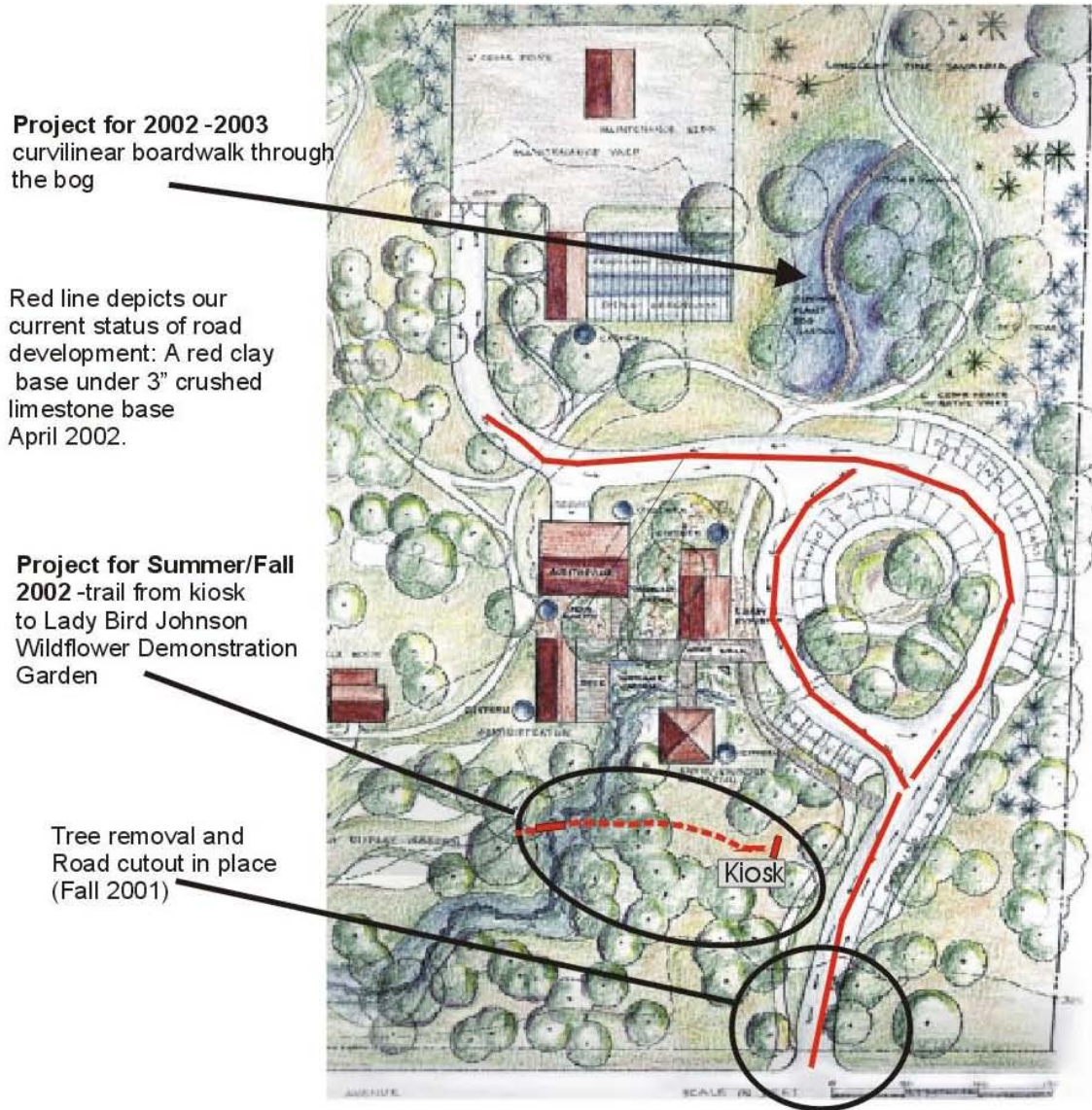
Co-directors of the PNPC Dr. David Creech and Dr. James Kroll welcomed Young Foundation Executive Director Carol Marvin when she visited in May. The foundation has been solidly behind our activities in the past three years. Grants have helped with construction of the Jaderloon greenhouse for propagating natives and for the signage at the entrance and in the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Demonstration Garden. This summer we submitted a proposal to the foundation for \$12,500 for three more development projects. Again, the Young Foundation came through, and in 2002-2003 we will be

adding three more features to the designed landscape:

- Horticulture Facility pad improvements for hardening off native plant crops
- Wooden walkway through the Bog Garden
- Trail and footbridge to the Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration garden

These features are shown on the next page, which was included in that proposal. This drawing also gives a good idea of where the new entrance, the wooden walkway, and the new trail and footbridge fit into the overall Concept Plan. Our special thanks to **PNPC board member Sue Ripley** and her husband Richard who have been keenly interested in

our work at the PNPC and who realized very early on that our educational mission fits in with similar objectives of the George and Faye Young Foundation.



This drawing shows current and future developments in the context of the Darrel Morrison Concept Plan of 2000. Each step we take we get closer to full realization of the dream. This Concept Plan is our guide to every design decision we make at the PNPC. It is the center panel of the new sign at the new main entrance of the PNPC, on North Raguet Street, just north of Raguet Elementary School.

Wonderful Support in 2002

Our sincere thanks go to PNPC founding members who have contributed to development of the PNPC this past year. You answered the call for support we made in the first *PNPC News* in February this year. We are delighted to recognize you here and with the benches that will soon be installed around various sites at the PNPC. These benches will be the same heavy-duty construction as those in the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden and will be identified with the name of the donor on a weatherproof anodized label. We manufacture these benches ourselves and make sure they are anchored in place permanently. Look for these to be finished by Thanksgiving. Thank you, founding members:

Carolyn and Bruce Wallace, Houston
Four Seasons Garden Club, Nacogdoches
John Anderson, Nacogdoches
Joe Max Green, Nacogdoches
Josephine Shanks, Houston
Jack Irwin, Nacogdoches
Arthur Temple, Lufkin
Harold Maxwell, Diboll*

***Did You Know This About Giving?**

One of the substantial gifts given this past year was matched by the giver's employer, Temple-Inland Foundation in Diboll, Texas. This wonderful program multiplies the gift and helps us do more. Thanks Mr. Maxwell for making the initial gift, and for checking the appropriate entry on the donations form so that we also received the matching amount. **Contributions are always welcome. Use the enclosed form and mail to us.**



PNPC Development Research Associate Barbara Stump was in the right place at the right time to win a \$400 membership incentive drawing at the Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce Fourth Friday Luncheon held March 22, 2002, sponsored by First Bank & Trust East Texas. The funds are being put to good use in placing labels to identify the 100 native plant species in the Lady Bird Johnson

Demonstration Garden. Shown in the photo are, left to right: Michael Goode, Vice President, First Bank & Trust East Texas; Linda Flores, Vice President of the Nacogdoches County Chamber of Commerce; Mark Norman, the SFA Agriculture instructor who did the initial site analysis for the PNPC; and Barbara Stump.

Seen Blooming This Summer

While selecting images for our new entrance sign, **Education Coordinator Elyce Rodewald** captured some remarkable images of some rare beauties. In July, the **Carolina lily**, *Lilium michauxii* bloomed near the bend of Tucker Branch on the mesic slope area. For about two weeks this area was filled with the nodding blooms on 1- to 3-foot stalks with uniquely shaped whorls of five petals at the nodes.



This brilliant red **bee balm**, *Monarda* (shown left), was blooming heavily in the cut-flower test plots behind the Horticulture Facility greenhouse, as was the even deeper red of **cardinal flower**, *Lobelia cardinalis* (shown right). Lobelia is a wetland plant that spreads readily, if given the chance, in shady rich pine forest soils such as occur at the PNPC.



Cultivars of *Gaura lindheimeri*, the Texas native **white gaura**, have become popular garden perennials. However, this white native growing in the cut-flower plots shows how garden-worthy the true species is. It self-seeds, makes small clumps of red-mottled foliage, and shoots up 3- to 4-foot wands of tiny white orchid-looking blossoms off and on all summer.

There's always something of interest in bloom or fruit at the PNPC, so be sure to visit in different seasons. Each spring the forest north of the Tucker House is filled with clouds of **Cornus florida**, **white dogwood**; look for the leaves in this grove to turn red this fall. The new plantings of water-loving *Taxodium distichum*, **bald cypress**, along Tucker Branch will also turn rust red before defoliating with cold weather in November.



Take a Walk on the Wild Side—Elyce Rodewald, Education Coordinator

The philosophy of the education program at the PNPC mirrors that of Luther Burbank, who wrote, in *The Training of the Human Plant* in 1906: “Every child should have mud pies, grasshoppers, water-bugs, tadpoles, frogs, mud-turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, water-lilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hayfields, pinecones, rocks to roll, sand, snakes, huckleberries and hornets; and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best part of his education.”

In Spring 2002, 175 students participated in the pilot program “Go Wild!” at the PNPC. They sharpened their observation skills on a scavenger hunt looking for 15 objects placed in the display gardens that didn’t really belong in nature such as hair clips, a toy pig, a spoon, and a clothespin. It sounds easy, but typically, students only found one-quarter of the objects on their first try. With a little encouragement, the second attempt had a better outcome. As students explored the xeric upland, mesic mid-slope, and riparian ecosystems, they were encouraged to sketch two or three plants in each area. Observation skills and artistic ability increased dramatically from start to finish of the activity. Students also compared two wetland habitats—the creek-side area in front of the Tucker House and the marsh area near the greenhouse. They checked the pH and temperature of water and compared the vegetation in both areas. History lessons were incorporated into the tour as we observed shells in the native Weches rock, talked about the first owner of the property, and discussed the use of various plants by Native Americans. Each student made a “sweet grass” bracelet to take home. Students developed

an appreciation for the physical skill necessary to twist the grass evenly into cordage; and, since students worked with a partner, they also used skills of cooperation and patience. For most students, the highlight of the visit to the PNPC was a close-up and personal look at a carnivorous plant—the **pitcher plants** (*Sarracenia alata*) living in the PNPC bog. The real-life drama of a fly getting caught in the sticky hairs of a pitcher plant was better than watching the Discovery Channel!

We encourage all teachers and students to visit the PNPC this fall and to look beyond the classroom for the “best part of education.” Dabble for invertebrates in the creek, touch an endangered plant, taste a paw paw, listen to a pileated woodpecker, and breathe in the fresh forest air. Come on...take a walk on the wild side! **To schedule a guided tour or classroom visit, call Elyce at 936-468-1832.**

Notes from Dr. Creech’s Garden Nook

There isn’t anything as dynamic as a garden in its infancy. If you think about it, the PNPC is just that, barely into the toddler stage, and let’s face it, getting into everything. The cool smell of fall is in the air and the summer proved kind for plants and people in the Pineywoods. For this issue, let’s focus on one very important effort of the PNPC: the introduction of superior native landscape plants.

The PNPC is embracing our SFA Mast Arboretum philosophy of building collections of important landscape genera. At the PNPC, the enthusiasm is the same, but the emphasis is totally on native flora of the South. There’s plenty to work with. Here are four “natives” (two vines and two shrubs) that are entrenched in the nursery and landscape world of the South, and increasing in popularity all the time.

***Bignonia capreolata* ‘Helen Fredel’ (cross vine)**—We’re convinced that this Greg Grant introduction is the best of the best. Cross vine is a popular woody evergreen vine with a great bloom show. In our work, ‘Helen Fredel’ has flowers that are larger than any of the other varieties we have under trial (‘Tangerine Beauty’, ‘Atrosanguinea’, ‘Jekyll’, ‘Dragon Lady’, and a couple of others we can only call “reds”). Propagation is a bit perplexing. Our experience over the last two years has been that cuttings often make excellent callus in mist propagation but fail to initiate roots. We are still working on this. Stems laid horizontally and pressed only slightly into the medium appear to root better, but it is a slow process that wastes propagation bed space. Horticulture student Andrew King is attempting root cuttings this fall. We need several hundred for distribution to other arboreta in the South and to nurserymen interested in improved varieties. [A larger image of this lovely plant was shown in the February 2002 issue of *PNPC News* and is one of the blooms featured on the Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration Garden sign.]



***Callicarpa americana* ‘Matt’s Pink’**— This Matt Welch find is an American beauty-berry with pink berries! The berries of this common deciduous shrub can be found in

shades of purple and lavender, and a white form exists. I have never seen a pink-berried form of the beautyberry in the wild, and everyone I asked in the South said it would be new to them. From Matt's original collection we managed to get three strong plants. Because they propagate easily from cuttings, we should have 100 one-gallon plants ready to trial at the PNPC, with some for distribution. In the shade house, the berries were definitely a good pink at the start but soon changed to faint pinkish white within a few weeks.

***Wisteria frutescens* 'Dam B'**—This native wisteria was found by Lynn Lowrey in the early 1980s near the dam of Dam B, a lake in southeast Texas. This form, that we are just now producing and distributing in good numbers, is superior to much of what is currently in the trade. The inflorescences can exceed 8" in length and summer reblooming is good. ***Wisteria frutescens* 'Amethyst Falls'** is the number one variety in the trade in the South, and was introduced by Head-Lee Nursery in Seneca, South Carolina. A key trait of this variety is that it does not produce seedlings, which means it has energy to push summer flowers. In side-by-side comparisons, 'Dam B' has performed admirably in that category as well, yet it produces viable seed. There is no comparison in the length of the bloom. We have produced about 100 seedlings of *Wisteria frutescens* 'Dam B' and will be planting them on the fence on the south side of the PNPC, at close spacing to act as a screen. More importantly, this gives us an opportunity to do some selection work. Also exciting is the fact that we are now proudly in possession of a pink-flowered form of *Wisteria frutescens*, a Pete Loos and Matt Welch find from near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Those plants are still in their containers and good numbers of cuttings won't be available until next summer.



***Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Lowrey' (Oak Leaf Hydrangea)**— This native of the Deep South is accepted in the landscape world as a premier native landscape shrub. While it's true that oak leaf hydrangea is not native to East Texas, it is wild in nearby Louisiana and is definitely well adapted to our region. This deciduous shrub sports huge white inflorescences in May and early June and provides a bold statement in the garden. Fall color is good. Generally, oak leaf hydrangea performs best with a little shade, particularly protection from the hot western summer sun. 'Lowrey' was found by Lynn Lowrey near Fulsher, Louisiana. We are also testing about 100 seedlings of 'Lowrey' alongside the stream that wanders in front of the Tucker House. 'Lowrey' has a large bloom, is fairly erect and stiff, and sports a good burgundy fall color. In three or four

years, any superior performers from this seedling set should become obvious and may make the grade as new and popular landscape plants.



Our 3Rs Program—Research-Rescue-Reintroduction—in Action

The SFA Mast Arboretum has been researching *phlox nivalis* ssp. *Texensis*, **Texas trailing phlox**, since 1995. Several graduate students collected endangered plants, with permission from the landowners; researched methods for propagation and tested them; then grew new stock for reintroduction. The PNPC has these lovely purple phlox planted in front of the Tucker House in the Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration Garden and in production propagation blocks by the Horticulture Facility greenhouse.



These plants are the second crop to be purchased by the National Park Service for reintroduction into protected sites in The Big Thicket Preserve near Beaumont. Similar research results have been achieved for the *Gaillardia aestivalis winklerii*, **white firewheel**, and for *Hibiscus dasycalyx*, **Neches River rose mallow**. Our 118-acre conservation easement at **Mill Creek Gardens**, established in 1995, is another protected reintroduction site for much of our research.

Summer Activities—Lance Craig, PNPC Research Associate

Things are really moving along here at the PNPC and show no signs of slowing down. Because of the rather mild temperatures this summer and with the occasional summer rains, we have limited our irrigation to almost zero in the Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration Garden. This is just one of many reasons for the use of native plants in the landscape, but that is a whole other write up in itself. The greenhouse is up and running while the finishing touches are being added around the Horticulture Facility pad. Two new trails are being added; one will encircle the **Bog and Prairie Garden** and the other will connect the main entrance with the **Lady Bird Johnson Demonstration Garden**. Please feel free to take a stroll and enjoy the fall color. For the third straight year we are attacking the privet species (*Ligustrum japonicum*—**Japanese privet**, and *L. sinense*—**Chinese privet**) in the bottomland along the eastern side of the site. We are hoping to finally have this invasive exotic nuisance exterminated. This exotic invasive genus is so rambunctious that it has formed a dense evergreen screen across the bottom 25 acres that

makes it impossible to navigate through in some places and has killed some native plant material by overshadowing it.

Champion Tree Reception



Monday, September 23, 2002, from 5:15-6:15 p.m., the Texas Forest Service presented a citation to **SFA President Tito Guererro** for the **Texas State Champion Yaupon (*Ilex vomitoria*)**, which is located on PNPC property. SFA, city, and community leaders attended the reception that was co-sponsored by the PNPC, the Texas Forest Service, and Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful. In accepting the award, Dr. Guererro proudly said, "What do people usually say when they're state champions? We're No. 1!"



The Texas Forest Service awards these citations to qualifying tree specimens based on the stem (trunk) circumference, crown spread (diameter), and total height. The TFS also recognized two other state champions in other locations within Nacogdoches: a **Texas sugarberry (*Celtis laevigata*)**, shown left, owned by Duane Stephens that is located on the banks of LaNana Creek near Pecan Park, and a **Carolina Basswood (*Tilia americana*)**, shown right, owned by Tom



Collins that is located in the Washington Square Historic District. In his remarks about the tree recognition program, John Boyette, regional Resource Development Forester for the TFS, said the program is not only fun, but also it is one that helps people notice and value trees that they might otherwise take for granted. The Yaupon is a native under-story tree in the Pineywoods, and as such, finding this champion in the PNPC habitat is very appropriate. The program also helped future students learn the value of trees: SFA forestry undergraduate **Eric Hall** located and submitted applications for both the yaupon and the sugarberry, while **Matt Welch**, SFA graduate student in biology and now Research Associate in the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, nominated the basswood. **Forestry Dean Scott Beasley** presented certificates to both students.

Two **PNPC board members, John Boyette** and **Cheryl Boyette**, director of Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful, were responsible for bringing this reception to the PNPC. It was a beautiful fall afternoon, and those who attended saw the grounds around the Tucker House in beautiful shape, thanks to the efforts of **Lance Craig** and his crew. Thanks go to KNB and Cheryl for the refreshments, and to John and Cheryl for their continued and public support of the PNPC.

Contact Information

For native plant horticulture questions, call Lance Craig:
936-468-4104 or lcraig@sfasu.edu

To schedule a “Walk on the Wild Side” class, or schedule a special tour of the
PNPC, call Elyce Rodewald: 936-468-1832 or erodewald@sfasu.edu

Between newsletters, watch our Web site for updates: click on the Native Plant
Center button on the Arboretum Web site: www.sfasu.edu/ag/arboretum .

To send messages for future newsletter issues, or to discuss donation options,
contact Barbara Stump at bstump@sfasu.edu, or call her at 936-468-4129.