



Happy Holidays

# ILLUSTRATED FLORA OF EAST TEXAS NEWSLETTER



An Illustrated Texas Floras Project ♦ Volume I, Number 2, December 2000

## State of the Flora



Well, here it is, time for another update on the *Illustrated Flora of East Texas*. Progress has been made on many fronts. **Linny Heagy**, designer/illustrator, has been working on a couple of maps: one of the Big Thicket and a map of the rivers in East Texas (see pages 3 and 4). She has also been working on the icons that will be used in the Flora. As with the *Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas*, the East Texas flora will have icons to indicate Texas and East Texas endemics, introduced plants, endangered flora, poisonous plants, and new with the East Texas book, an icon to indicate invasive exotic species. These small icons are interspersed throughout the descriptions as instant information. And new with this newsletter, the logo for the first volume of the East Texas Project crowns this front page. It was designed from *Cypripedium kentuckiense* by Linny.

**Robert George**, project assistant, and **George Diggs**, coauthor, have added to the Illustrated Texas Floras Web page. It has been beefed up with a section on botanically related websites, the East Texas brochure, a rivers of East Texas map, the first volume of the newsletter, map of the vegetational areas of East Texas, a list of counties included in the East Texas area, and the entire literature cited from The North Central Texas book. You can check it out at:

<http://artemis.austinc.edu/acad/bio/gdiggs/EastTxFlora.html>

New with the East Texas book will be the inclusion of distributional ranges for the East Texas species throughout the U.S. and Canada. This would be a daunting task without the help of the new CD-ROM based on John Kartesz's *Synonymized Checklist of the Vascular Flora of the United States, Canada, and*

*Greenland*. Included on the CD are distributional maps for all of the species found in the U.S., Canada, and Greenland. From these maps a description of the distribution of each East Texas species was written. Also new will be the inclusion of the authors of the genera and families. Some new scans of illustrations were added to the manuscript courtesy of **Dr. Robert Kral** who is retired from Vanderbilt University and currently a BRIT research associate. He graciously offered the use of his superbly executed drawings of several species in the genera *Xyris* (yellow-eyed-grass), *Lachnocaulon* (bogbutton), and *Eriocaulon* (pipewort).

Robert took a trip to East Texas in November to look at specimens in the herbarium at UT Tyler and give a presentation to the Native Plant Society of Texas, Tyler chapter. He then headed to Nacogdoches to go through the Stephen F. Austin herbarium in search of uncommon plants and to confirm ranges and locations.

George Diggs has, for the most part, finished some of the larger groups, such as the lilies, irises, and ferns, and most of the other smaller families. This leaves two very large families, the grasses and the sedges. He is, for now, involved with tracking down and working on references.

**Monique Reed**, coauthor, continues to edit the various treatments, offering critically important suggestions and observations.

**Matt White and Jason Singhurst** and others continue to keep us posted on their field observations—many thanks to our volunteer “field correspondents”!

## **Botanicus Trivialis** (from [www.UselessKnowledge.com](http://www.UselessKnowledge.com))

Some orchids come from the deep jungles. But every country in the world, and every province in Canada, has at least one orchid species, including the Arctic.

The oak tree can take as long as 30 years to produce its first crop of acorns.

The rings of a tree are always farther apart on the tree's southern side. Woodsmen often read tree rings to find the compass points.

The primary purpose of growing rice in flooded paddies is to drown the weeds surrounding the young seedlings — rice can, in fact, be grown in drained areas.

## **Species Spotlight**

*Trillium texanum* Buckl. (Texas Wakerobin or Texas Trillium)

Liliaceae (Lily Family)

Genus name from “tri” for the three leaves and other parts in threes

The trilliums are an interesting group of monocots. They number about 50 species and are found in Asia and eastern and western North America. Though some botanists put them in the family called the Trilliaceae, they are usually grouped with the lilies. There are two basic groups of trilliums: those with flowers on stalks or the pedicellate trilliums, and those without, the sessile trilliums. We have both in East Texas. The Flora will treat four or five species of trillium (the presence of one species is dubious). *Trillium texanum* is our only pedicellate trillium; the others are sessile, and all are found in or around the Pineywoods region.

The group, as a whole, is characterized by plants with a single stem and only three leaves in a whorl at the summit of the plant. A single flower adorns the plant, and in the case of Texas Trillium, is borne on a stalk about four centimeters (1 1/2 inches) above the leaves. Though many of the trilliums have maroon or green flowers, the flowers of Texas Trillium are white. Below the white petals, which turn a beautiful rosy pink or

magenta with age, are the three green sepals. The whole plant stands about 25 centimeters (ten inches) tall. There's nothing quite like coming upon a colony of trilliums while out walking in the East Texas woods. They are usually found in low, moist woods, along stream banks, or where water seeps occur, resulting in saturated soils. Found only in East Texas and Louisiana, the Texas Trillium is a rare plant. Unfortunately, because of the difficulty of growing trilliums from seed and the fact that they do not flower until they are several years old, populations have been adversely affected by collection from the wild.



## Limelight

The *Illustrated Flora of East Texas* will appropriately be dedicated to **Dr. Elray S. Nixon**. Born in Escalante, Utah on February 5, 1931, he received his B.S. degree from Brigham Young University in 1957, his M.S., also from Brigham Young, in 1961, and his Ph.D. from the University of Texas in 1963. After a stint as Professor of Biology at Chadron State College in northwest Nebraska (1963-65), he took up residence in the Biology Department at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches in 1965. He remained there until his retirement. During that time he published numerous articles, scientific papers, and received a number of grants. In addition, he has authored two books: *Trees, Shrubs and Woody Vines of East Texas* (completely illustrated) and *Plant Characteristics, Aids to Plant Identification* with Suzanne Anderson. He has acted as project director and principal researcher on various surveys and impact studies for different governmental agencies, including extensive work on the Trinity River for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. All the while, he taught classes at both the undergraduate and graduate level, directed graduate students in their theses, and developed the herbarium. As a dedicated botanist, he spent many hours in the field collecting specimens and data resulting in numerous publications. Many of these were on the ecology and composition of woody species associations in East Texas. He has also served the scientific community as president of the Texas Academy of Science and has been on numerous committees. He has received awards from both the Texas Organization for Endangered Species, and the Native Plant Society of Texas. Dr. Nixon has contributed in many ways to the knowledge of plants in East Texas, and this recognition is well deserved.

## Other BRIT Bits

— On October 20, George Diggs, Barney Lipscomb, and Bob O’Kennon received the Donovan Stewart Correll Memorial Award from the Native Plant Society of Texas at their annual meeting held in Denton, Texas. This award is given for scientific works in the field of native Texas flora.

— On October 15, Linny Heagy, Art Director for the Illustrated Texas Floras Project, represented BRIT at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Research Center’s annual Fall Festival and Plant Sale. She was there to display the *Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas*. Also on exhibit was a 24 X 36 inch panoramic fine art print of the artwork, The Texas Blackland Prairie, 1849, that was commissioned by BRIT and Austin College for the Flora’s dust jacket. She also exhibited the North Central Texas Flora at the Natural History Museum in London while attending a conference on Drawing from Nature, Art and Illustration in the Natural History Sciences in April of last year.

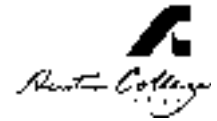
— The original botanical illustrations, cover and frontispiece art, created by Linny, for the *Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas* will be exhibited at the Kochi Prefectural Makino Botanical Garden, Kochi, Japan, March 20, to May 20, 2001. Also included will be the artwork of **Ruth Andersson May**, Dallas artist and conservationist.

— A new species of the sunflower family was recently discovered just 40 miles west of Fort Worth. Its discoverer, a local, learned amateur botanist, Jeff Quayle, was an instrumental “field correspondent” for the *Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas*. Thanks to his knowledge of local flora he recognized it as something unusual and brought it to BRIT for identification. It was determined to be a new species in the genus *Senecio*. It has been named *Senecio quaylei* after its discoverer by **Dr. Ted Barkley**, a research associate at BRIT. It will appear in the December 2000 issue of **Sida, Contributions to Botany**, published by BRIT.





Illustrated Flora of East Texas  
 A collaborative project of **BRIT** and the  
**Austin College Center for Environmental Studies**



<http://artemis.austinc.edu/acad/bio/gdiggs/loras.html>

Below are the recent donors to the Illustrated Flora of East Texas Project. Their generous support help pave the way to the completion of this project.

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*Herbaria of SMU, BRIT and VDB  
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