

WILDFLOWER

A non-profit organization committed to the preservation and reestablishment of native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees.

Wildflower Center loses one of its staunchest supporters: Miss Helen Hayes

Miss Helen Hayes, co-founder and co-chair of the National Wildflower Research Center, died of congestive heart failure on March 17, 1993. With her death, the Wildflower Center lost one of its staunchest supporters.

"Helen Hayes gave so generously of her talents and in the giving, brought joy into countless lives. I'm deeply grateful to have shared her life," said Lady Bird Johnson, co-founder and co-chair of the Wildflower Center with Miss Hayes.

Miss Hayes and Mrs. Johnson guided the Wildflower Center from its inception.

"I will especially feel her spirit in the wildflower fields she loved and the legacy of native plants she championed through the work of the National Wildflower Research Center, which she co-founded with me. She will remain a national treasure in our hearts," Mrs. Johnson said.

In the 1992 PBS-TV special "Wildflowers with Helen Hayes," Miss Hayes recounted the Wildflower Center's beginnings.

"In 1982, my friend Lady Bird Johnson



Lady Bird Johnson, left, greeting Helen Hayes at a Wildflower Center event in New York City

approached me with her idea of starting a research center to promote the use of wildflowers. She was 70 and I was 81. I thought, Why not? Let's go for it! That association has been one of the happiest, most joyful experiences of my life."

Gardening with wildflowers was one of Miss Hayes' passions. In a 1985 message to the Wildflower Center membership, Miss Hayes said she was proud of her association with the Center.

"The natural beauty of wildflowers has always provided me with a peaceful and happy feeling. I have reveled in

the fresh and ever-changing patterns of spring and summer color, the serenity and delicate beauty of the individual flowers, and especially in the stability and permanence they represent," she said.

Miss Hayes' distinguished career on the stage and screen lasted more than 80 years. She received many of her profession's most coveted awards, including the Oscar, the Tony, and the Medal of Freedom.

The Wildflower Center deeply mourns the loss of one of its co-founders. Our wildflowers will forever be duller without Helen Hayes.

Our members can help us change the world!

Every spring, the Wildflower Center receives a flood of letters sharing renewed enthusiasm for the season's natural bounty of color. Members report on the most beautiful wildflower displays, on new field guides and other native flora books, and on workshops and conferences. Our members also ask what they can do to further the cause of protecting and using native plants in planned landscapes.

First, thank you for the input. Whether we can acknowledge each letter or not, our Clearinghouse uses all this information. Special thanks go to those of you who have donated new publications to our library!

Second, you can assist the Wildflower Center and have an impact on your own area. One of our Clearinghouse's highest priorities is keeping a current list of nurseries and seed suppliers who carry propagated native plants and seeds. We monitor this information to try to provide consumers with local resources, so

hearing from you about the nurseries and seed companies helps us keep updated and accurate. The same holds true for display plantings of native plants at botanic gardens, parks, and businesses; landscape architects who specialize in designing with native plants; and new field guides and landscaping books.

We encourage you to do any or all of the following:

- Notice the mowing practices of local, state, and federal highway rights-of-way. Call the appropriate agencies, usually the state Department of Transportation, to compliment them when a beautiful stretch of roadside is left unmowed — especially during the blooming and seed-set seasons — and question them when maintenance crews are mowing down wildflower stands. There are safety policies to follow, but mowing is often done unnecessarily, and at great expense, creating a homogenous front lawn look instead of a field of colorful wildflowers.

- Encourage maintenance departments that are responsible for roadside mowing to mow at the tallest mower setting, approximately four to six inches. Mowing at the lowest settings damages perennials and grasses, damages mowers when the blades hit high spots, and can damage passing cars and adjacent property with flying rocks.

- Replace dead, diseased, or expensive-to-maintain shrubs, trees, or perennial flower beds in your landscape with appropriate native species, or add a few native plants to an existing landscape that is not ready for replacement.

You can help us heal the Earth — one native plant at a time!



David K. Northington, Ph.D., is executive director of the National Wildflower Research Center.

Wildflower

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WILDFLOWER CENTER NEWS

Special thanks to **KLBJ-AM, Above and Beyond Travel**, and the **Austin Four Seasons Hotel**, who graciously sponsored our Wildflower Days festival in April! Thousands of people attended the annual outdoor festival held on our grounds

The Wildflower Center is pleased to have botany intern **Daniel Atha** working during the spring semester. Daniel is a senior botany student at Southwest Texas State University. His responsibilities include working on the Clearinghouse Database and creating an information packet for secondary school teachers. Daniel's position was made possible by Center members who responded to our summer appeal. Thanks to all who helped!

Students at Gattis Elementary School in Round Rock, Texas, will soon learn the value of a little dirt under their fingernails. They will begin planting a habitat garden this spring as part of a pilot program funded by **Southwestern Bell**. Wildflower Center staff members will

work with teachers and students in the field and in the classroom.

The Center's "**Hearts and Wildflowers**" fund-raiser in February was such a success, development associate Molly Sherman said we could have sold out twice! The day's itinerary included a special tea with Mrs. Johnson at the LBJ Ranch. *Town & Country* magazine sent a writer on the bus, so look for an article about the Center!

A unique hands-on **workshop** dedicated to wildflowers and native plants was held in March for a group of 24 elementary teachers. Center botanists provided the teachers with a comprehensive look at native plants and their role in the overall ecological picture of Central Texas.

Research assistant **Marcia Hermann** recently conducted a prescribed burn of 10 acres of prairie on the Center grounds. A team of volunteers and staff armed with water trucks, backpack sprayers, and special control equipment were on hand to keep the fire within recommended parameters.

MONARDAS: MEDICINAL MINTS OF DISTINCTION

In 1773, American colonists expressed their feelings about British taxes by sinking a few shiploads of tea in Boston Harbor. Afterward, some took to filling their cups with a native American substitute: Oswego tea, brewed from the wild mint *Monarda didyma*.

Most areas of the United States are home to one or more species of *Monarda*, known more or less interchangeably as bergamot, beebalm, or horsemint.

M. menthaefolia hugs the slopes and sheltered meadows of the Rocky Mountains. *M. pectinata*, the plains beebalm, prefers the southwestern deserts and central plains. *M. citriodora*, also called lemon-mint, dots pastures and roadsides all over Texas. *M. didyma*, perhaps the showiest of the lot with its long scarlet flowers, grows in the moist woodlands of the Great Lakes region.

Their dense flower clusters appear in late spring, in shades of purple or pink to almost white, or sometimes red. Some will bloom throughout the summer and into the fall.

Like most of their cousins in the mint family, the horsemints are strongly aromatic, and most have medicinal uses. The Cherokee brewed a tea from *M. fistulosa* to treat heart trouble and fevers, and to promote restful sleep. Beebalm teas have been said to relieve coughs, rheumatism, and gastric distress. Spotted beebalm (*M. punctata*) contains the antiseptic thymol, also found in Old World thyme.

Like other mints, the *Monardas* have square stems and opposite leaves, with one pair of leaves positioned at right ang-

les to the next. Flowers are typical, with five petals fused into a two-lobed tube. The upper lobe stands upright or arches. The lower droops, rather like the lower petal of an orchid. There are four long stamens, two functional and two rudimentary, attached to the throat of the tube.

It's the arrangement of the flowers that really gives horsemints their distinctive appearance. They're packed in tight whorls, with a cluster of leaf-like bracts below each one. Some species (such as *M. fistulosa* and *M. menthaefolia*) form a single, terminal whorl. Others, including *M. citriodora*, will stack three or four on a stem that may stand up to three feet tall.

The genus was named for Nicolas Monardes, physician to King Philip of Spain, who wrote about New World plants in the late 16th century. But it was John Tradescant, royal gardener to England's Charles I, who took home samples of *M. fistulosa* in 1637. It still grows in English gardens today, along with tame varieties of *M. didyma* (exported in 1744).

White settlers in America also liked growing these mints, and may have helped spread them beyond their native ranges. *M. fistulosa*, for example, can be found from Florida to Quebec (and as far as West Texas), but it's considered an

introduced species in the northeast.

The common name "bergamot" is borrowed from the bergamot orange (*Citrus bergamia*) of the Mediterranean, in honor of the nose-tingling fragrances of some species. The scents attract bees and butterflies, but are said to repel biting insects such as mosquitoes. Try throwing a few blooms in your campfire or rubbing the crushed leaves on your skin.

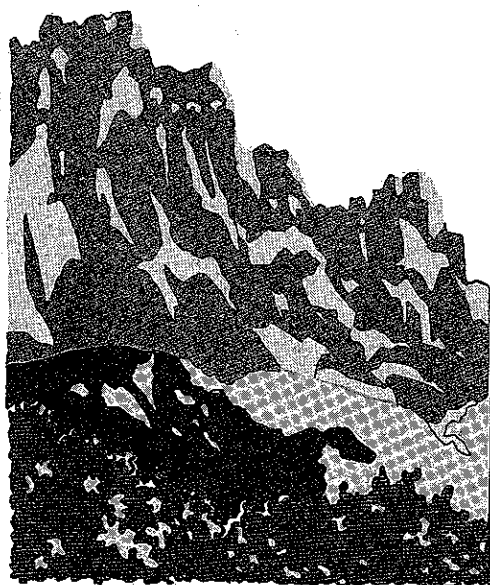
Some say the name "horsemint" refers to the plant's comparatively large size. Others cite its "coarse, unruly appearance, which resembles a horse's spreading tail."

Today, with the growing interest in wildflowers, a lot of us have learned to accept a little unruliness in exchange for natural beauty.

Dyanne Fry Cortez, volunteer staff writer, holds a degree in horticulture from Texas A&M University, but has always liked wild plants best. If you're interested in contributing an article to the newsletter, please contact the editor.

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Wildflower

NOTEBOOK



Echinacea angustifolia is a daisy-type composite flower with purple ray flowers that are about the same length as the disk is wide. The disk is dome-shaped and prickly points protrude when it is drying and going to seed, explaining its Omaha-Ponca name, *mika-hi*, or "comb plant." The leaves, which feel like sandpaper, are narrow, lanceolate, and covered with hairs. The root is thick and fleshy, storing starches so the plant can bloom perennially.

Native American wisdom is the root of our current knowledge of *Echinacea's* medicinal value. Plains Indians, including Pawnee, Choctaw, Lakota (Sioux), Omaha-Ponca, and Kiowa tribes used *E. angustifolia* for a variety of ailments including colds, snakebites, and toothaches.

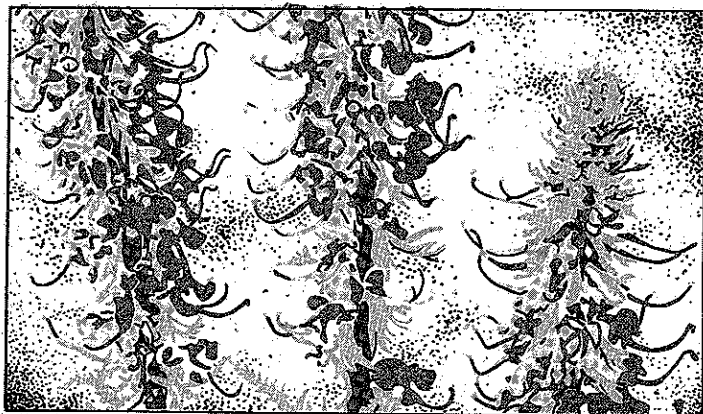
The increasing use of *E. angustifolia* and other *Echinacea* species for medicinal immune enhancing properties creates the danger of over-collecting. To counter this, *E. angustifolia* and related species are being developed for commercial production.

Germans have done most of the modern scientific testing on *E. purpurea* imported from the United States. Studies show it works to fight infection and swelling by stimulating the cell's ability to ingest invading particles with structures called macrophages and phagocytes.

The exploitation of *Echinacea* as a medicinal herb can only be sustained if natural diverse plant communities are preserved. It would be wise to use only cultivated *Echinacea* to save the wild populations.

Scientific name: *Echinacea angustifolia*
Pronunciation: ec 1 NAY sha an goos ti FO lee a
Common names: Purple cone-flower, black Sampson, rattle-snake weed, Kansas snake root
Family: Compositae or Asteraceae (Sunflower family)
Range: Southern Canadian

provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba south through the U.S. central plains from North Dakota to Texas
Habitat: Dry prairies, barrens, hillsides
Bloom period: May and June



elephants, don't be so quick to laugh! *Pedicularis groenlandica*, elephant head, is named for the shape of its rose-red, bilaterally symmetrical flower that strongly resembles the head of a very small pachyderm. Produced in spike-like racemes, the flowers are composed of a five-lobed calyx and a corolla twice as long as the calyx.

The corolla gives elephant head its distinctive appearance. The upper lip of each corolla has a beak that curves down and then up again to form the elephant's trunk. A round head located directly behind the trunk and the side lobes of the lower lip of the corolla provide the elephant's large ears. The unique structure aids in pollination and, at the same time, reduces the chances for hybridization with other *Pedicularis* species.

The flowers bloom on leafy stems that grow 12 to 28 inches tall. The leaves are long (2 to 10 inches), narrow, and pinnately divided with sharp-toothed lobes.

The specific epithet, *groenlandica*, suggests that the first specimens of this plant were identified in Greenland, but the original specimens, named in 1795, were actually collected from Labrador.

Native Americans used the roots of another species, *P. canadensis*, to prepare a tea used to treat stomach upsets, diarrhea, anemia, and heart trouble. Poultices made from the roots were used to relieve tumors, swellings, and sore muscles. Also considered an aphrodisiac, finely grated roots were secretly added to the food eaten by the object of one's desire.

Botanical Name: *Pedicularis groenlandica*
Pronunciation: Pet ICK you lair iss green land ICK ah
Common Name: Elephant head
Family Name: Scrophulariaceae (Figwort family)
Range: Throughout the western mountains; Greenland to

Alaska, south to New Mexico, east to Arizona and north to California
Habitat: Wet mountain meadows and by streams at moderate to high altitudes
Bloom Period: June through August

Next time someone tells you that they have seen pink

FROM THE
FIELD

Delaware Nature Society Native Plant Sale, May 1-2, Hockessin, DE. Contact: Ashland Nature Center, P.O. Box 700, Hockessin, DE 19707, (302) 239-2334.

Conservation/Wildflower Workshop, May 3, Byron, IL. Sponsored by the Garden Clubs of Illinois and Byron Forest Preserve District. Contact: Cae Radloff Daly, 16650 S. Manitou Rd., Lockport, IL 60441, (708) 301-3412.

Door County Spring Wildflowers, May 13-15, Door County, WI. Sponsored by The Ridges Sanctuary. Limited registration. Contact: Paul Regnier, P.O. Box 152, Baileys Harbor, WI 54202-0152.

Florida Native Plant Society, May 14-16, Haines City, FL. Contact: Bill Bissett, 2929 J.B. Carter Rd., Davenport, FL 33837, (813) 422-6664.

Annual Wildflower Workshop, May 21-22, Enid, OK. Sponsored by the Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation, the Oklahoma Garden Clubs, the Oklahoma Native Plant Society, and the Enid Centennial Boomers. Contact: Beautification Office, 200 NE 21st, Oklahoma City, OK 73105, (405) 521-4037.

Loess Hills Prairie Seminar, May 29-31, Onawa, IA. Contact: Western Hills Area Education Agency, 1520 Morningside Ave., Sioux City, IA 51106.

Gulf Coast Regional Native Plant Conference, June 9-12, Lafayette, LA. Contact: Native Plant Conference, Lafayette Natural History Museum, 637 Girard Park Dr., Lafayette, LA 70503, (318) 235-6181.

Eighth Annual Wildflower Festival, June 13, Storrs, CT. Contact: Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, 75 N. Eagleville Rd., Storrs, CT 06269-3023, (203) 486-4460.

Rocky Mountain Rendezvous, June 24-27, Vail, CO. Contact: Ann & Dick Bartlett, 1569 S. Holland Ct., Lakewood, CO 80232.

Set your table with wildflowers — at a special price!

Great news for Wildflower Center members!

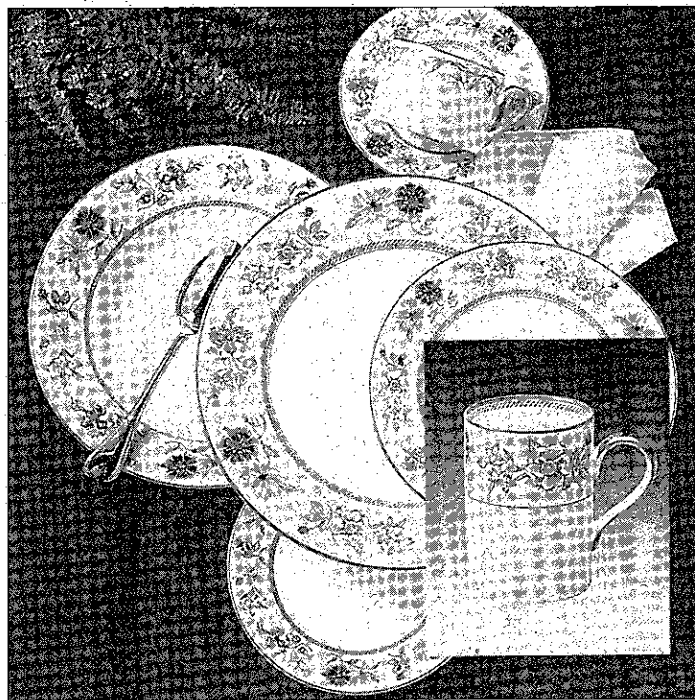
During the months of May and June only, members can save 20 percent on all purchases of Fitz & Floyd's "American Wildflower" china collection through the catalog and gift shop. An extra 10 percent is being offered on *china purchases only* in addition to the usual member discount of 10 percent, bringing member savings to 20 percent.

The pattern, which the Wildflower Center helped Fitz & Floyd develop, is shown at right. A *minimum order* of only two pieces of the pattern is required to take advantage of the special.

The Center requests that china orders during this period be written separately from regular gift orders and mailed to

"China Special" at the Center (see address on back page). Or better yet, telephone your order to (512) 929-3600 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Central Daylight Time, Monday through Friday.

Orders must be postmarked no later than June 30 to receive this extra discount. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.



Center forms Young Associates group

The Wildflower Center is building a new foundation of support in Austin. The Young Associates already are wowing the Wildflower Center staff with their enthusiasm for the Center and its mission.

Already in the planning stage: an annual fund-raiser set for Saturday, Oct. 16 in Austin!

Jerry Jeff Walker, who wrote the songs "Mr. Bojangles" and "Desperadoes Waiting for a Train," will perform many of his songs at the event, which will be held at the UT Alumni Center. Please plan to attend this special event!

The Young Associates steering committee has approximately 50 members in the 25- to 45-year-old range. The groups's goals include:

- building a broad foundation of support and awareness in the Austin

community for the Wildflower Center's environmentally sensitive mission; and,

- organizing, executing, and supporting events for young adults and their families.

Although the Center is a national organization, many people involved with the Center have wanted to start a local support group.

The Young Associates will plan the annual fund-raiser, help develop programs for children, host other Wildflower Center sponsored events, and spread the Center's mission throughout the Austin community.

We believe this group will be highly successful in the Austin area as young people and children continue to grow and develop their sense of environmental responsibility.

The Native Beauty of America Photo Contest sponsored by the National Wildflower Research Center

Winners of this exciting photo contest will collect prize money—plus the First Prize photo in each category will be featured in the Wildflower Center's traveling exhibit. Enter now!

Photo Contest Rules:

1. The photo contest has two categories: (1) **Home or Commercial Native Plant Landscapes**, and (2) **Wildflower Vistas**.

2. Slides must predominantly feature native plants, and the predominant plants in the photos must be identified on the entry blank or on a separate sheet.

3. Photos will be judged on technical quality (sharpness, correct exposure), composition, originality, and relevance to the "Native Beauty" theme. Photos will be judged by Wildflower Center staff members and a panel of photography experts. The decisions of the Wildflower Center and its judges are final.

4. Entries must be submitted on duplicate 35mm slides or duplicate slides from 35mm prints. All entries must be received **no later than June 15, 1993**.

5. Contestants may enter as many times as they wish, but must pay an entry fee for each entry submitted. Entry fee for current members is \$10; entry fee for non-members is \$15.

6. Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third places in both categories. First Prize winners will receive \$250, Second Prize winners will receive \$150, and Third Prize winners will receive \$100. Winners will be notified by mail. To qualify to receive a prize, winners must sign an affidavit of eligibility and release. Employees, members of the Board of Trustees and the Advisory Council, and family members of the National Wildflower Research Center and its judges are not eligible to enter.

7. All slides become property of the National Wildflower Research Center, which may use the slides in its publications, educational programs, publicity efforts, and slide library. Contestants must know the names and addresses of any identifiable persons featured in the slides, who must also sign an affidavit of release without compensation. No slides will be returned. The National Wildflower Research Center cannot be responsible for lost, late, misdirected, damaged, or postage due mail.

8. Do not mark your name on the slides. Your slide will be assigned a code number when it arrives at the Wildflower Center.

9. Mail your 35mm slide submission(s), fully completed entry blank, and a check or money order for the total entry fee (made payable to the National Wildflower Research Center) to: The Native Beauty of America Photo Contest, National Wildflower Research Center, 2600 FM 973, North, Austin, TX 78725.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
Daytime phone number: () _____
Current Wildflower Center Member: Yes () No ()
Number of entries submitted: _____
Total entry fee: _____
Plant(s) featured in the slide(s): _____

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Wildflowers Work!

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