



NATIONAL WILDFLOWER RESEARCH CENTER

wildflower

March/April, 1996

Volume 13, Number 2

# Celebrate Spring with a Brilliant Bunch: The Annual Wildflower Days Festival April 13 and 14

Patricia Alholm  
PR/Marketing Manager

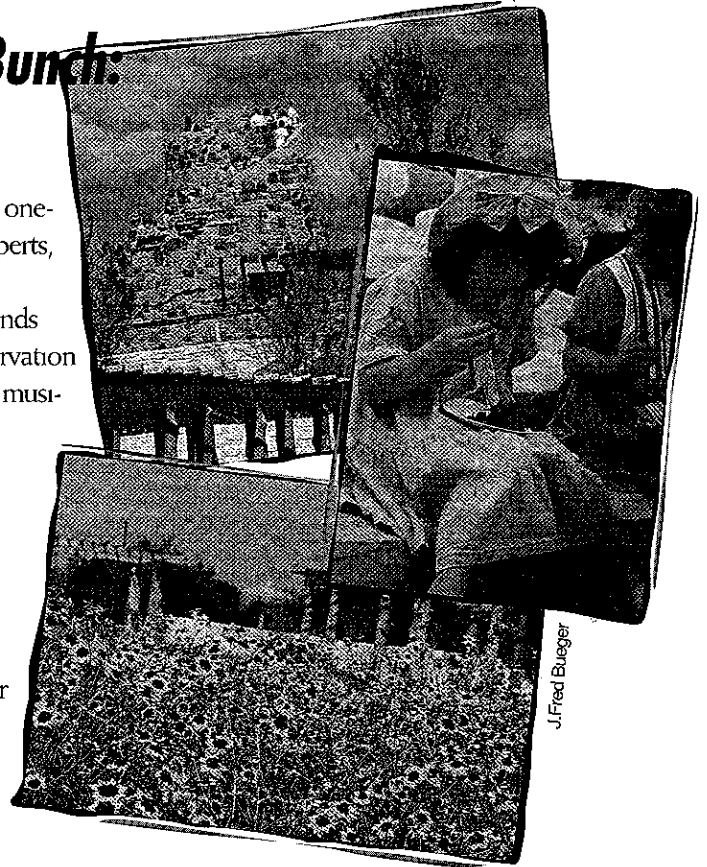
Mother Nature is throwing a party, and you're invited! The Wildflower Center's annual Wildflower Days Festival celebrates spring in the heart of the Central Texas Hill Country Saturday and Sunday, April 13 and 14, from 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. both days. This event also marks the first anniversary of the Wildflower Center facility, and it promises to be the best festival ever!

The Center's 42 acres will be the setting for nationally known environmental speakers and authors, storytellers and outdoor demonstrations, plus great food and

fun. Festival-goers can talk one-on-one with gardening experts, tour the gardens, stroll the Nature Trail, or spy on friends from the 43-foot tall Observation Tower. A variety of Austin musicians will provide music throughout the gardens.

The Hill Country's enormous fields and lush roadsides of wildflowers are to Texas what the fall foliage is to New England, and the Wildflower Center is the hub of wildflower activity.

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J. Fred Bueger

## The Call of the Wild (flowers)

The Wildflower Center's annual Texas Wildflower Hotline will operate from March 15 through May 31. The Hotline is your best source of information for locating the best roadside wildflower viewing spots in Texas. If you're planning to visit Texas and want to know where to go for a spectacular drive, call (512) 832-4059.

Each year, the Center's Hotline receives 5,000 calls, and a similar line supplied by the *Austin American-Statesman* newspaper logs another 4,000 - 5,000 calls. This public service is updated weekly by Wildflower Center botanists, and is made possible this year by the generous support of KLBJ AM 590 NEWSRADIO.

But wait, there's more. Other gardens and arboreta also maintain wildflower hotlines, and can make your spring travel plans more eye-appealing. Additional hotlines include:

- Phoenix, AZ. The Desert Botanical Garden, (602) 481-8134 (March 1 - April 30)
- Sun Valley, CA. The Theodore Payne Foundation, (818) 768-3533 (March 1 - June 30)
- Salt Lake City, UT. Red Butte Gardens, (801) 581-4747 (April 1 - September 30)

If you know of other wildflower hotlines, please send this information to the Wildflower Center, ATTN: Editor.

# The Visitor Experience

Imagine a classroom serving thousands of different people and providing information and knowledge that will last a lifetime.

This "giant classroom" concept is the basis for the Wildflower Center facility, and serves as the foundation for the educational experience awaiting visitors. Our 42-acre facility is a model of environmentally conscious construction and one of the best resources in North America for education about native plants and their uses in planned landscapes.

When you visit the Center, you'll notice from the beginning that our mission is reflected in the "campus" layout: several buildings, with landscaped spaces between them, have much less impact on the land

than one large structure. You'll also notice an aqueduct above the entry walk, part of the largest rooftop rainwater collection system of its kind in North America. Ask for the brochure!

Our Visitors Gallery is the ideal starting point for your Wildflower Center experience. Take time to study the interesting exhibits, listen to Ralph the talking lawn mower, check the native plant database, and watch the video explaining the importance of native plants. Then, step into the Courtyard and observe a striking example of using native plants in formal spaces. Needless to say, the Courtyard is quickly becoming a favorite venue for weddings and special gatherings. The nearby Seed Court is an excellent opportu-

nity to explore the many textures, colors, and shapes of wildflowers as you walk toward the three terraces of the Demonstration Gardens.

The lowest terrace of the Demonstration Gardens contains the shadehouse and two greenhouses, where plants are propagated and prepared for the gardens and grounds. The middle terrace of the Demonstration Gardens is comprised of 23 Theme Gardens, showing the infinite variety of

*continued on page 8*



*Joseph Hammer is the Director of Visitor Services at 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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## JOIN THE WILDFLOWER CENTER... SPECIAL RATES END SOON!

Time will soon run out to join or rejoin the Wildflower Center at the special introductory rate of just \$25 for a visiting family membership. Come mid-summer, this rate will increase, however, an individual membership will remain \$25. Look for details about new membership levels in future newsletters and mailings.

Your membership is very important, and provides essential resources for the Center's educational programs. Remember, the Center receives no federal, state, or local funding. All support comes from friends like you -- people who care about North America's native plant heritage and want to help preserve and reestablish it. You are an essential part of the Center's continued growth.

Wildflower Center membership is full of great benefits.

- Free admission to the Center's gardens and grounds
- Reciprocal privileges at more than 100 gardens and arboreta across North America
- Discounts on factsheets and other valuable information from the Center's Clearinghouse
- A 10% discount in *Wild Ideas: The Store* and the catalog
- The Center's award-winning newsletter

Additional benefits are available for membership levels of \$50 and above. For more information, call the Membership Office at (512) 292-4200 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Central Time, Monday through Friday. We'll help you make the most of your membership no matter where you live.

# Join the Wildflower Center & See the World

The Wildflower Center has just the remedy for your wildflower travel bug! Join us for two exceptional tours created specially for our members, filled with wildflowers and unique opportunities to discover the hidden heart of two great cultures.

From June 12 through June 23, join the Wildflower

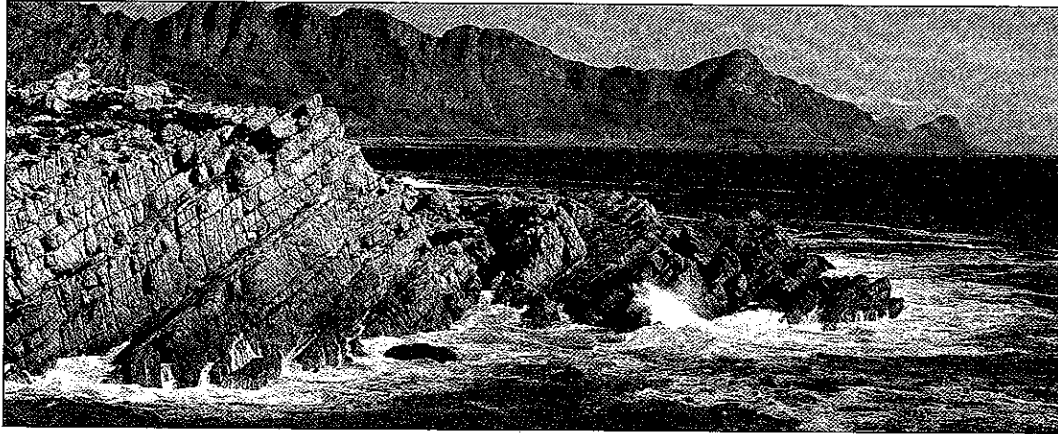
luxury Gregans Castle Hotel on Galway Bay, Ireland.

The Center's second tour, in late August and early September, takes you to one of the most significant and treasured floral regions of the world, The Cape Province, for A Floral Safari to South Africa. There is a burst of interest in this region since the lifting of

stay by visiting Mala Mala Game Reserve, one of the world's famous private game lodges. This exciting Floral Safari has been custom designed for the Wildflower Center by Victor Emanuel Nature Tours.

Your tour leaders, Craig Hilton-Taylor and Mae Daniller, bring a wealth of

All reservations will be taken on a first come, first served basis, and a deposit of \$600 will hold a space on either tour. For a detailed itinerary of the tours and further information, call Mae Daniller at (512) 292-4200 ext. 140



Steenbras River mouth, on the Garden Route, South Africa.

Hillel Daniller

Center's executive director, Dr. David Northington, for a visit to the Gardens and Wildflowers of Southern England and Ireland. Not only will you be led by wildflower and garden experts such as Christopher Lloyd of Great Dixter, Rosemary Verey of Barnsley, and Lord and Lady Carrington of Bedlow Manor, you will have ample time to enjoy the hospitality of stays in private country homes and four-star hotels. This will be complimented with fascinating meal-time conversations with hosts, including renowned artist Fleur Cowles and the distinguished conservationist Dr. Miriam Rothschild. You will visit more than 22 gardens and natural areas, ending at the

apartheid, and the most beautiful cape in the world is yours to explore with two leaders, who will introduce you to the sights and sounds of this magnificent country.

The historic city of Cape Town is your base for excursions into wildflower preserves, magnificent old Cape Dutch-style homes, and natural areas including a colony of penguins on the drive to Cape Point. Other highlights include carpets of wildflowers, fascinating fishing villages, and flower shows on the western coast. You will wind along the Garden Route to view old-growth forests, the beautiful coastline, and a variety of unusual flora and fauna. You may choose to extend your

knowledge and experience with them. Craig is a professional botanist with enormous expertise in the Cape flora. He'll provide the botanical background to make your tour a unique learning experience. Mae is director of development at the Wildflower Center and grew up in South Africa. She will offer an insiders view of the country and special opportunities to enjoy South African hospitality in private homes and gardens.

The Wildflower Center invites you to participate in these special experiences, where we will blend visits to gardens and striking natural areas with interesting people, fascinating private homes, and a lifetime of memories.

## Gardens and Wildflowers of Southern England and Ireland

Date: June 12 - 23, 1996

Cost: \$3,600 (double occupancy based on 18 participants; airfare not included)

Size Limit: 22

Final Payment Due: April 15

## A Floral Safari to South Africa

Date: August 25 - September 7, 1996 (optional tour extension to Mala Mala to September 12)

Cost: \$4,400 (double occupancy based on 20 participants; airfare not included)

Mala Mala Extension: \$2,100 (double occupancy based on 20 participants)

Size Limit: 25

Final Payment Due: May 20

Please  
join  
us!

# Having a Few Friends for Dinner

F. M. Oxley

Education Programs Mgr. / Sr. Botanist

*They're creepy and they're ooky! Mysterious and kooky! They're all together spooky. The Addams Family!*

Do you remember Gomez and Morticia, Pugsley and Wednesday, Gramama, and Uncle Fester? Oh, and let's not forget Lurch and Thing! Just your typical middle-class family living in a dilapidated two-story mansion filled with all sorts of treasures, including a bear rug that growled when stepped on, a cat named Kitty (she roared like a lion), and Cleopatra, a huge meat-eating plant Morticia fed to keep it from eating their guests (of course, Gomez or Morticia had to rescue an occasional unsuspecting victim from Cleo's leafy embrace)

As a child, I was fascinated by the idea that something green and leafy might enjoy a hamburger just as much as I did. When I learned that it went beyond TV and science fiction make-believe, that there really were plants capable of trapping and eating animals, I was no less fascinated, but I was pretty sure I didn't want to stumble into Cleopatra on my way home from a late night movie

Almost 200 species of flowering plants have evolved methods to capture live prey. Living in nutrient-poor environments, such as bogs, marshes, and swamps, these plants use highly specialized leaves to trap insects, lizards, frogs, and, in some cases, even small birds. Once captured, bacteria, fungi, and/or enzymes break down soft tissues, and the plant absorbs the released nutrients, particularly nitrogen

## WHO'S HOSTING THE PARTY?

**VENUS FLYTRAPS:** Sensitive souls. Perhaps the most familiar of all carnivorous plants, the Venus flytrap, *Dionaea muscipula* (Family Droseraceae), has leaves that work like a steel trap. The two halves of the leaf blade appear to be hinged along the midvein, and the margins are lined with stiff, interlocking, hair-like projections



Three to five tiny trigger hairs are located on the inner surface of each leaf. Touching two trigger hairs at the same time, or one trigger hair twice within a few seconds, causes the two halves of the blade to snap shut, trapping the insect. The more the insect struggles to escape, the tighter the trap closes. Enzymes secreted by the leaves break down the insect's soft body parts, and needed nutrients are absorbed. When digestion is complete, the leaf opens, ready to begin the process again. While the leaf can open and close many times, it can capture and digest only three insects before becoming inactive or dying

**SUNDEWS:** Stuck on you! Sundews (*Drosera* spp.) are also members of the Droseraceae, and cousins of the Venus flytrap. Tiny plants, sundews are often no more than 2.5 to 5 cm (1 to 2 in) in diameter. The upper surfaces of their leaves are thickly covered with club-shaped hairs or tentacles. Each hair is tipped by a glistening drop of sticky fluid containing digestive enzymes. Insects landing on the leaves stick to the hairs. Larger insects can usually break loose, but smaller insects remain stuck. As the insect struggles, more and more hairs are triggered, bending inward to trap the insect until it is overwhelmed. The enzymes digest the insect within a few days and the hairs return to their upright position, ready for the next unsuspecting victim

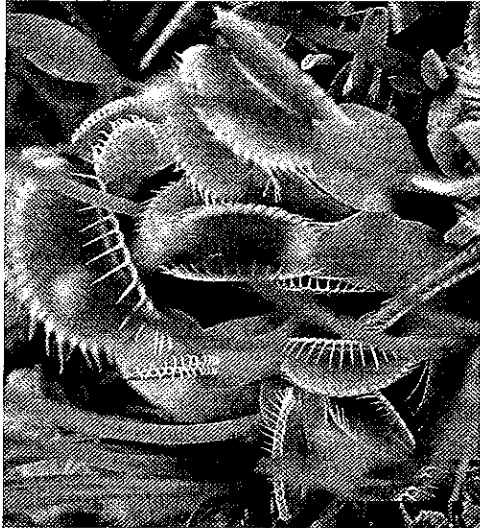
**PITCHER PLANTS.** Like my new scent? The leaves of pitcher plants, *Sarracenia* spp. (Family Sarraceniaceae), are modified into tubes of various shapes and sizes. Some have umbrella-shaped flaps over the open ends. Insects, attracted by the plant's distinctive fragrance, search for nectar secreting glands at or on the rim of the tube. Once inside the tube, the insect is unable to negotiate the highly polished or, in some cases, waxed walls. Stiff, bristle-like hairs prevent the insect from making its way back up the tube, and force it downward until it falls into a pool of fluid at the bottom and drowns. The body is broken down by bacteria and the plant's digestive enzymes, releasing the necessary nutrients for absorption

**BLADDERWORTS AND BUTTERWORTS:** Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water... Bladderworts, *Utricularia* spp. (Family Lentibulariaceae), are aquatic plants that live along the edges of lakes and streams and trap prey using tiny

*continued on page 7*

# Wildflower

## NOTEBOOK



**Botanical Name:** *Dionaea muscipula*

**Pronunciation:** Dee-on-IE-a mus-KIP-ew-la

**Common Name:** Venus flytrap

**Family:** Droseraceae

Endemic to the coastal plains of North Carolina and northeastern South Carolina.



**Botanical Name:** *Sarracenia purpurea*

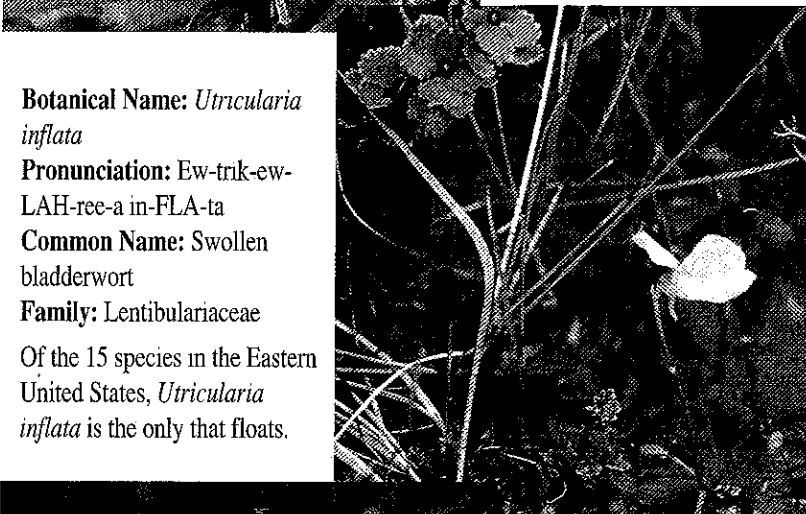
**Pronunciation:** Sa-ra-SEN-ee-a pur-PEWR-ree-a

**Common Name:** Common pitcher plant;

Indian cup

**Family:** Sarraceniaceae

Inhabiting sphagnum bogs, the common pitcher plant is widely distributed throughout Eastern North America.



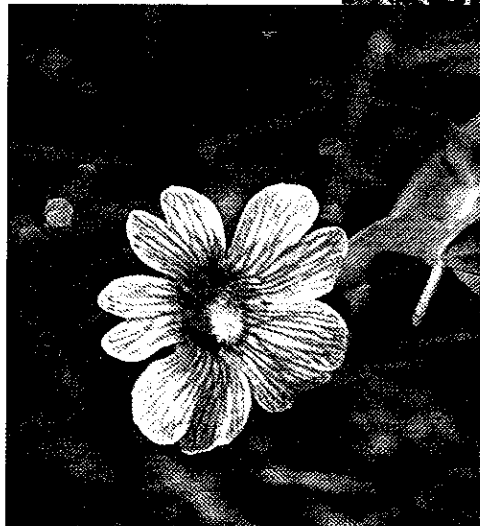
**Botanical Name:** *Utricularia inflata*

**Pronunciation:** Ew-trik-ew-LAH-ree-a in-FLA-ta

**Common Name:** Swollen bladderwort

**Family:** Lentibulariaceae

Of the 15 species in the Eastern United States, *Utricularia inflata* is the only that floats.



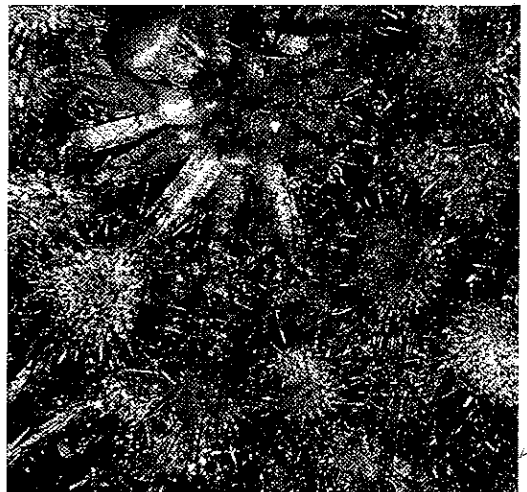
**Botanical Name:** *Pinguicula pumila*

**Pronunciation:** Ping-GWI-kew-la PEW-me-la

**Common Name:** Dwarf butterwort

**Family:** Lentibulariaceae

Native to the Southern United States, *Pinguicula* spp. produce a fungal odor believed to attract prey.



**Botanical Name:** *Drosera capillaris*

**Pronunciation:** Dro-se-re ca-pill-AIR-is

**Common Name:** Pink sundew

**Family:** Droseraceae

The genus name, *Drosera*, Greek for "dewy," refers to the sticky drops on the leaves of this Southern species.

Focus on carnivorous plants!

# The Native Landscape Design Institute

## "The Spirit of Place"

### June 19 - July 16, 1996

The Wildflower Center is pleased to announce the establishment of the Native Landscape Design

Institute Headquartered at the Wildflower Center and led by Darrel Morrison, FASLA and former dean of the School of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia, the two, 2-week sessions of the Institute are open to advanced students in landscape architecture as well as professional landscape architects and designers. College credit may be arranged for both courses. The theme for these sessions is "The Spirit of Place"

The first session, June 19 - July 2, will

focus on native plant community concepts, taxonomic principles, plant identification, and the aesthetics of dynamic natural landscapes. Field work will be conducted at the Wildflower Center and a variety of natural areas in the Central Texas Hill Country. Guest lecturers will provide instruction in ecology, the natural and cultural history of the region, ecological methods, taxonomy, and descriptive writing and watercolor techniques.

The second session, July 3 - July 16,

will be an intensive design studio focusing on landscape design and restoration based on native plant communities. Field interpretation and analysis of natural and designed landscapes will be accompanied by a series of design exercises involving hypothetical and real Hill Country sites

Classes for both sessions meet all day, Monday through Friday, and half-days on Saturday. Lunches and transportation are provided for all class days. The cost of each session is \$950 per stu-

dent, or \$1,800 for both sessions, and does not include housing, breakfasts, or dinners. While session two builds on session one, it may be taken by itself. Both sessions are limited to 18 students.

For more information about these unique courses, the availability of college credit, housing options, and registration materials, please contact: National Wildflower Research Center, Native Landscape Design Institute • 4801 La Crosse Avenue • Austin, Texas 78739 • (512) 292-4200



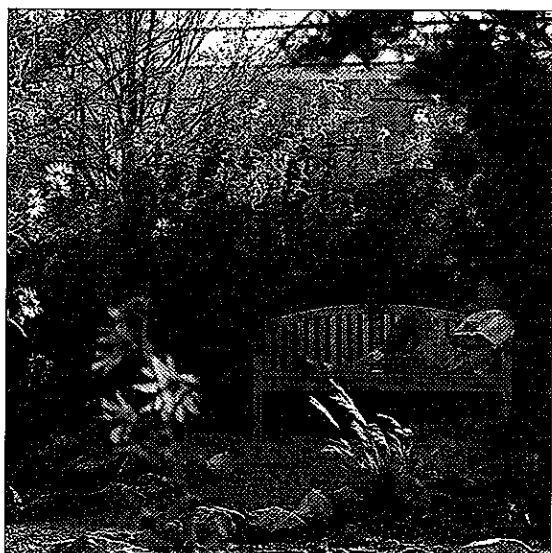
## Commemorative Benches Available

The Wildflower Center has a limited number of on-site commemorative benches available for dedication to honor or remember a loved one. Each bench will be marked with a small brass plaque naming the honoree and those who have given the bench in their honor (space permitting). The benches currently on site may be dedicated, or benches may be dedicated and placed according to the Center's landscape development plan.

Three varieties of benches are available: a

rustic limestone and cedar bench for the Meadow or on the trails (\$3,000), or two styles of formal, plantation teak benches by Smith & Hawken (\$3,000 or \$5,000). Commemorative benches are dedicated for the life of the bench, which is 20 years, and will not only ensure long recognition, but provide a welcome resting place for our many visitors.

For more information about the Center's commemorative bench program, call the Development Office at (512) 292-4200



Greg Hursley

## Wildflower Days

*continued from page 4*

The Center's gardens and grounds boast more than 500 species of native wildflowers, trees, grasses, shrubs, and vines, and many will be in bloom in mid-April.

We invite you to join us anytime for a family outing, a fun-filled weekend, or perhaps, a good reason to visit Austin. If you need hotel or general travel information, please call the Austin Convention and Visitor's Bureau at (800) 926-2282; they will be happy to provide information about visiting Austin and the Hill Country.

So mark your calendar, pack your bags, and prepare to experience an unforgettable annual tradition in the heart of wildflower country. And please, don't forget your camera!

# Carnivorous Plants

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bladder-like structures located at the base of finely dissected leaves. Each bladder has an opening at one end, complete with a trapdoor. Four curly, stiff hairs near one end of the trapdoor act as triggers. When an insect touches one of the hairs, the trapdoor springs open and water rushes into the bladder, sweeping the hapless insect along with it. The trapdoor snaps shut behind the insect, sealing it inside the bladder where it is broken down by bacteria. The nutrients released are absorbed through the bladder wall cells.

Like bladderworts, butterworts (*Pinguicula* spp.) are members of the Lentibulariaceae. Butterworts like moist soils, but don't necessarily live in nutrient-poor environments. Their leaves are covered with tiny, mucus-secreting glands. Insects land on the leaves and become ensnared in the liquid. Once trapped, the glands release more and more liquid until the insect is immersed and drowns. The pool of digestive enzymes dissolves the soft parts of the insect and the nutrient-rich fluid is absorbed by the same glands.

**REMAINS OF THE DAY** What happens to the remains of those unfortunate victims of the deadly repast? The chitinous insect exoskeletons dry up and blow away from Venus flytraps and sundews, while bladderworts simply flush out any debris. Pitcher plants really have no way to get rid of any excess prey. However, these "left-overs" provide food for other organisms capable of living in the pitcher without being trapped and digested.

Are they creepy? Maybe a little Mysterious? Yes, interesting, too. Do I want to be a guest at one of their dinner parties? I think I'll pass!

# F From the E L D

## NORTHEAST

Washington Crossing, PA. *Explore Wildflowers*, April 17, Contact: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, P.O. Box 103, Washington Crossing, PA 18977, (215) 862-2924.

Washington Crossing, PA. *Native Plants in the Landscape Conference*, June 13 - 15, Contact: Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, P.O. Box 103, Washington Crossing, PA 18977, (215) 862-2924.

## MID-ATLANTIC

Wintergreen, VA. *The Spring Wildflower Symposium*, May 10 - 12, Contact: The Wintergreen Nature Foundation, P.O. Box 468, Wintergreen, VA 22958, (804) 325-8530.

## SOUTHEAST

Chattanooga, TN. *Wildflower Festival*, April 13, Contact: Chattanooga Nature Center, 400 Garden Rd., Chattanooga, TN 37419, (615) 821-1160.

Atlanta, GA. *Native Plant Symposium*, April 20, Contact: The Georgia Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 422085, Atlanta, GA 30342, (404) 688-2225.

## OKLAHOMA/TEXAS

Buchanan Dam, TX. *Annual Wildflower Show*, April 6 - 7, Contact: Highland Lakes Birding and Wildflower Society, P.O. Box 431, Buchanan Dam, TX 78609, (512) 793-6211.

Cuero, TX. *Wildflower Excursion*, April 13, Contact: DeWitt County Wildflower Association, P.O. Box 995, Cuero, TX 77954 (512) 275-9942.

Cuero, TX. *Fun Run/Walk Through Wildflowers*, April 20, Contact: DeWitt County Wildflower Association, P.O. Box 995, Cuero, TX 77954 (512) 275-9942.

## MIDWEST

Elk Creek, MO. *Prairie Days*, April 13, Contact: Hamilton Seeds and Wildflowers, 16786 Brown Road, Elk Creek, MO 65464, (417) 967-2190.

## WEST

Bozeman, MT. *Winter Plant Identification*, April 13, Contact: Montana Native Plant Society, P.O. Box 6444, Bozeman, MT 59771, (406) 994-6618.

## CALIFORNIA

Claremont, CA. *Wildflower Walks*, March 16 - May 19, Contact: Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 North College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711, (909) 625-8767.

Pasadena, CA. *Wildflower Walkabouts*, March 30 - 31, Contact: Earthside Nature Center, 3160 E. Del Mar Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107, (818) 447-2830.

Claremont, CA. *Annual Wildflower Show*, April 6 - 7, Contact: Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, 1500 North College Ave., Claremont, CA 91711, (909) 625-8767.

## NORTHWEST

Portland, OR. *Pacific Northwest Native Plants*, March 9, Contact: Berry Botanic Garden, 11505 S.W. Summerville Ave., Portland, OR 97219, (503) 636-4112.

## CANADA

Vancouver, BC. *Natural Dyes from West Coast Plants*, May 11, Contact: VanDusen Botanical Gardens, 5251 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC V6M 4H1, (604) 257-8673.

## Celebrate Arbor Day with "Victory Garden" Host, Jim Wilson

Jim Wilson, host of the popular PBS television show "Victory Garden" and author of *Landscaping with Native Trees* and *Landscaping with Wildflowers*, will speak at the Wildflower Center Saturday, April 27, as part of the Center's Arbor Day festivities. Mr. Wilson will sign copies of his latest book before the program.

For more information, please call (512) 292-4200.

native plants. You'll want to check the three Home Comparison Gardens on the upper terrace, which are an ongoing experiment demonstrating that native plants not only save money, but can be used to give the identical landscaping look as non-native species.

A trip to the Wildflower Center wouldn't be complete without a view of the surrounding countryside from the Observation Tower, which is built around a 10,000 gallon cistern. Be sure to allow time for a walk along the idyllic, quarter-mile Nature Trail. Along the way, you'll peer into the natural Cave and enjoy a close-up look at the Wildflower

Meadow, abloom in all its spring glory.

Ready for a break? The Wildflower Cafe offers a chance to relax and reflect -- over a salad, soup, or sandwich. Need books to supplement your new knowledge, native plant information for your state, or the perfect wildflower-themed gift? The Wild Ideas store is the place to go. Your purchases help support the Center's education programs.

To fully experience all the sights, sounds, and smells of the Wildflower Center, set aside at least three hours. For those on a tighter schedule, informal tours of the Center led by specially trained docents are available (call

ahead for times). If you are bringing a group of 10 or more and want to schedule a tour, please contact our registrar, for information about meeting or wedding space, please contact our facility sales manager.

Your visitor experience might include a picnic in the shade, numerous photo opportunities, a lecture or conference, a visit to the Research Library, or Saturday afternoon fun at the Children's Little House. Whatever your favorite activity, your membership is more valuable than ever. Please join us this spring, and help celebrate our first anniversary in our new giant classroom

## Member's Notebook

Rex and Amy Hamilton, Wildflower Center members from Elk Creek, Missouri, created this beautiful native wildflower garden at their busi-

ness. Species include prairie beardtongue (*Penstemon tubae-florus*), pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*), yellow coneflower (*E. paradoxa*), fringed

poppy mallow (*Callirhoe digitata*), purple poppy mallow (*C. involucrata*), and royal catchfly (*Silene regia*)

If your family, organization, or business has used native plants to create an interesting planned landscape in your neighborhood or community, send a slide of the garden, the name of your organization, and a species list to the Wildflower Center, ATTN.

Editor: If you would like your slide returned, enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope



### Name Exchange

The Wildflower Center occasionally exchanges membership lists with organizations having similar missions and objectives. If you do not wish to have your name and address included in these exchanges, please send a card stating this desire along with your mailing address as it appears on the newsletter to NWRC, ATTN: Records Management, 4801 La Crosse Avenue, Austin, TX 78739.

If possible, please include the five-character membership code that appears above your name.



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

- ✿ Membership Information, call (512) 292-4200
- ✿ Wild Ideas. The Store, call (512) 292-4300
- ✿ General Information, call (512) 292-4100

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## Grow Native!

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