



The Sabal

May 2013

Volume 30, number 5

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Photos by Alfred Richardson and Christina Mild.

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Page number references for each plant species shown in the Sabal refer to:

"Plants of Deep South Texas," (PDST).

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May 2013 Mtg., Native Plant Project:

Tues., May 28th, 2013: at 7:30pm

"NPP Fieldtrip: TNC's Lennox Southmost Preserve"

by Ken King

Ken King will present a PowerPoint presentation on the unique plants and animals of Southmost Preserve and special projects carried out there.

Ken is co-author, with Dr. Alfred Richardson, of *Plants of Deep South Texas, A Field Guide to the Woody and Flowering Species* which has become the "must have" reference book/field guide for RGV native plants.

at Valley Nature Center, 301 S. Border,
(in Gibson Park), Weslaco. 956-969-2475

Photo right: *Iresine palmeri* (PDST p 66), Palmer's Bloodleaf.



The Sabal is the newsletter of the Native Plant Project.

It conveys information on native plants, habitats and environment of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas.

Previous **Sabal** issues are posted on our website [www.NativePlantProject.org].

Electronic versions of our **Handbooks** on recommended natives for landscaping are also posted there.

Change of address, missing issue, or membership: <bwessling@rgv.rr.com>

President - Ken King - (956)-968-8890 - <wk_king01@yahoo.com>

Tiny Flowers—

Shortly after deciding upon this topic, Ken King, Dr. Richardson and Christina Mild began hunting through photos to select worthy candidates for this newsletter. In about five minutes we realized that most flowering things native to this area have tiny flowers, making it a bit harder to narrow down the topic. We've selected species for which we have excellent close-up images which show many details of the bloom structure, as well as species which you may have never seen in bloom. We hope you enjoy this topic! Undoubtedly, you'll see it again in the future!



We have two *Pectis* species. They are easily distinguished:

Pectis angustifolia (ABOVE LEFT) has 8 ray flowers per head, and is more noticeable, growing in a clump up to 4" tall and strongly scented. It may bloom from spring through fall and is found in Hidalgo and Starr counties in rocky areas. The common name is **Limoncillo**, which denotes the small size of the plant and the fragrant scent. (See PDST, p. 116)

Pectis cylindrica (Photos ABOVE, CENTER and RIGHT) has 3 ray flowers per head, and is easily overlooked. *P. cylindrica* was not included in PDST.

Cylindric Pectis

Family: Asteraceae

Scientific Name: *Pectis cylindrica*

Habit: Annuals, branching and re-branching.

Leaves: Mostly opposite; blades variable, linear to linear-oblong to narrowly oblong, 3/8" to 1 1/4" long, margins entire with a few stiff hairs.

Flowers: Ray flowers 3, yellow, 1/8" or slightly longer; disc flowers yellow.

Fruit: Achenes about 3/16" tall; pappus of ray flowers with 2 lanceolate scales, sometimes with 1-3 bristles, disc flowers with 5 lanceolate scales.

Bloom Period: Spring, summer and fall.

Distribution: Hidalgo and Starr Counties.

Comments: Ken King and Al Richardson found this ephemeral specimen in the damp bottom of a caliche pit which periodically floods. The pit is located on the south side of La Joya.



Sanvitalia ocymoides
Yellow Sanvitalia
PDST pgs. 122-123.

Family Asteraceae.

Annual herbs up to 8" tall, usually creeping on the ground.
Ray flowers yellow. Disc flowers reddish-brown.
May bloom summer through fall.
Found in Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties.

Makes an attractive potted plant. Seeds offered in seed catalogs.

Flower heads contain very sharp scales which are painful to bare fingers.

Typically found in distressed sites.



Cressa nudicaulis,
Family Convolvulaceae.
PDST p. 190.
Leafless Cressa.

A gray, hairy perennial up to 8" tall.
May bloom throughout the year.
Flowers are about 3/8" long. (Magnified in this photo.)
Found in Cameron and Willacy counties in the coastal sands and clay hills.
Plants look like gray, narrow sticks.
Leaves are not noticeable.



Hedeoma drummondii
Family Lamiaceae.
PDST p. 284.

Desert Mint.

May bloom from spring to fall.

Found in Hidalgo and Starr counties.

The aromatic leaves have a sweet scent, which is reflected in the genus name.
Named in honor of Thomas Drummond, a nineteenth-century botanist.

Grows in well-drained, gypseous, gravelly, sandy, or caliche soils.



Scutellaria drummondii var. *runyonii*
Family Lamiaceae
PDST p. 289.

Runyon's Skullcap.

May bloom from late winter to spring.

The common name refers to the pale green fruiting bodies seen below the open blooms.

Found in Cameron and Willacy counties.

This specimen was photographed on the Glatz property in Rio Hondo on March 24, 2012.



Thin Leaf Brookweed.

Samolus velerandi subsp. *parviflorus*.

Family: Primulaceae.

PDST p. 362.

Almost succulent with a basal rosette of leaves up to 6" long.

Blooms from spring through fall in wet or damp places.

Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties.

BELOW: (See PDST p. 48.) Family: Acanthaceae.

Carlowrightia parviflora. **Carlowrightia.**

Subshrubs up to 20" tall, forming colonies. Easily cultivated.

Easily overlooked except during wet periods when leaves are larger and blooms are present.

Occurs in Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties.

Hostplant for the Crimson Patch Butterfly. (Larva BELOW LEFT.)

Found on the edges of brush or in shady areas.

An excellent plant for revegetation projects.





Family: Rubiaceae. Genus: Galium. (See PDST p. 371.)

ABOVE LEFT: *Galium aparine*. Catchweed, Bedstraw. Cameron and Hidalgo counties. May climb up several feet on support. Bristles on the stem and leaves are efficient in clinging to clothing.

ABOVE RIGHT: *Galium virgatum*. Southwest Bedstraw. Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties, found around rocky areas. Entire plant is only 5-6" tall. Flowers are less than 1/8" broad. Fruit, 3/8" broad, (circled in yellow) has hooked bristles.



Necklaceweed

Family: Scrophulariaceae

Scientific Name: *Veronica peregrina*

Habit: Small erect or leaning annuals up to 12" tall, usually less.

Leaves: Opposite (but leaf-like bracts alternate); petioles absent or very short; blades lanceolate to linear, about 5/8" long, the margins slightly toothed.

Flowers: Axillary; petals 4, white; less than 1/8" long.

Fruit: Capsules heart-shaped, less than 1/8" tall.

Bloom Period: Winter, spring, summer.

Distribution: Cameron, Hidalgo, and Starr Counties.

Comments: The plant parts can be difficult to interpret. Sometimes the stem is so short, the major part of the plant is the inflorescence. The inflorescence (a raceme) is apical, but looks like a continuation of the stem. It has alternate leaf-like floral bracts with smooth margins.

Generally found in wet areas.

Grows at Southmost Preserve in the loading dock wetlands.

Two subspecies are recognized.

Subspecies *peregrina* is hairless, and subspecies *xalapensis* has glandular hairs.

(Not included in PDST.)

LRGV Native Plant Sources

Heep's Nursery (& Landscaping)

(Mike Heep)
1714 S. Palm Court Drive
Harlingen, TX 78552
(956) 423-4513 * By appt. only

Valley Nature Center

301 S. Border Ave.
Weslaco, TX 78596
(956) 969-2475
<info@valleynaturecenter.org>
[www.valleynaturecenter.org]

Perez Ranch Nursery

(Betty Perez & Susan Thompson)
12 miles north of La Joya, TX
(956) 580-8915
<PerezRanchNatives@gmail.com>

Mother Nature's Creations

(Billy & Sue Snider)
2822 Nueces, Harlingen, TX 78550
Nursery open by appointment:
(956) 428-4897

NABA Butterfly Park
Old Military Hwy & Butterfly Pk Dr
Mission, TX 78552
(956) 583-9009

Rancho Lomitas Nursery
(Benito Trevino)
P.O. Box 442
Rio Grande City, TX 78582
(956) 486-2576 *By appt. only

Valley Garden Center
701 E. Bus. Hwy. 83
McAllen, TX 78501
(956) 682-9411

Landscaper using Natives:

Williams Wildscapes, Inc.
(Allen Williams)
750 W Sam Houston
Pharr, TX 78577
(956) 460-9864
[www.williamswildscapes.com]

Sponsors

Heep's LRGV Native Plant Nursery

Owned and operated by Mike and Claire Heep
We grow plants suited to landscaping
and revegetation in south Texas.
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NPP Board & General Meetings held at Valley Nature Center (ABOVE)

(Fourth Tuesday each month)

Board Meetings at 6:30pm. — Speaker at 7:30pm.

Most meetings held at Valley Nature Ctr. (see above)

2013-14 Meeting Dates:

Sept. 24th, 2013

Oct. 22nd, 2013

Nov. 26th, 2013

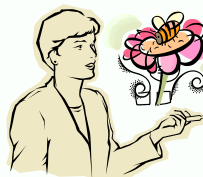
Jan. 28th, 2014

Feb. 25th, 2014

Mar. 25th, 2014

Apr. 22nd, 2014

May 27th, 2014



FROM: NPP; POB 2742; San Juan, TX 78589

The **Native Plant Project (NPP)** has no paid staff or facilities. NPP is supported entirely by memberships and contributions.

Anyone interested in native plants is invited to join. Members receive 8 issues of **The Sabal** newsletter per year in which they are informed of all project activities and meetings.

Meetings are held at:

Valley Nature Center, 301 S. Border, Weslaco, TX.

Native Plant Project Membership Application

Regular \$20/yr. Contributing \$45/yr

Life \$250 one time fee/person

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Native Plant Project, POB 2742, San Juan, TX 78589-7742*

TO:

NPP May meeting and speaker on:

May 28th, 2013 at 7:30pm –

"NPP Fieldtrip:

TNC's Lennox Southmost Preserve"

by Ken King

Ken King will present a PowerPoint presentation on the unique plants and animals of Southmost Preserve and special projects carried out there.

**presented at: Valley Nature Center,
301 S. Border, (in Gibson Park),
Weslaco. 956-969-2475**

Photo on right: Kept permanently flooded, an old loading dock adjacent to the Southmost Preserve office provides habitat for several animals, including this amphibian, a Rio Grande Siren whose photo was found on "Rio Grande Reptiles" Website.



This month's SABAL topic: "Tiny Flowers."