Volume 31 Number 1

We all share the same backyard... -Emily

Spring 2013

The **Mississippi Native Plant Society**, is a non-profit organization established in 1980 to promote the preservation of

1980 to promote the preservation of native plants and their habitats through conservation, education, and utilization.

President: Dr. Lelia Kelly 662-566-2201 leliak@ext.msstate.edu Co-conference chair: Margaret Gratz

Vice-President: Dr. Tim Schauwecker Tel: 662-325-7895, tjs2@msstate.edu

Secretary/Treasurer: Dr. Debora Mann manndl@millsaps.edu

Education Chair: Heather Sullivan

Trips Chairs:

Gail Barton; 601-483-3588 Igbarton@gmail.com Dr. Victor Maddox

The Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance promotes EE, supports the work of environmental educators and encourages the adoption of earth-friendly lifestyles leading to the sustainability of natural resources.

President: Jennifer Buchanan Jen.Buchanan@dmr.ms.gov 228-697-0553

President Elect: Janet Chapman Janet_chapman@deq.state.ms.us 601-961-5266

Secretary: Angel Rohnke angel.rohnke@mmns.state.ms.us

Treasurer: Peggy Guyton peggyguyton@gmail.com 228-324-3136

MEEA Mini-Grants Matthew Miller Matthewmiller328@gmail.com

Past Presidents: Terri Jacobson & Laura Beiser

MNP & EE Newsletter Editors:

Dr. John Guyton 662-325-3482, 228-324-4233 (cell) jguyton@ext.msstate.edu Peggy Guyton (see above) Brian Templeton 662-325-3190 btempleton@lalc.msstate.edu & Dr. Lucas C. Majure, 352-273-1962 Imajure@ufl.edu Lois Connington 662-325-0795 loisc@ext.msstate.edu

Mississippi's Wildflowers are Coreopsis spp. by John Guyton, Ed.D.

At the MNPS/MEEA joint conference I overheard discussion about which species of *Coreopsis* is Mississippi's official state wildflower and there were several opinions. And that was when Halla Jo Ellis joined the discussion and laid the question to rest. It was actually MNPS member Halla Jo who, representing the Garden Clubs of Mississippi, approached the Hinds County Senator and Representative that sponsored the bill that established *Coreopsis* spp. as the Mississippi Wildflowers. Halla Jo and I sat together at the December Project Learning Tree Board Meeting and I asked her to tell me the story.

The National Council of Garden Clubs was interested in every state having a wildflower. Louise Godwin was president of the Garden Clubs of Mississippi and Halla Jo was the Wildflower and Native Plants Chair of the Garden Clubs of Mississippi in 1990. Halla Jo visited many garden clubs, offering suggestions and inviting them to submit nominations.

Working with Felder Rushing and others they checked to see if any species of *Coreopsis* grew all over Mississippi. Turns out they did not find one species that grew all over Mississippi, however, they found many species covered the state and in a brilliant decision decided to include all species in the *Coreopsis* genus! Felder commented they include spring and fall-blooming perennials growing in meadows and on hillsides, as well as in flowerbeds and containers all over the state. What a beautiful choice!

Her group included other well-known advocates including Barbara Dorr and Pat Fordice. The Garden Clubs of Mississippi purchased seed and the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) planted them state-wide. Later MDOT purchased seeds and continued planting *Coreopsis* on the roadside right of ways. So popular was the campaign that MDOT sent Halla Jo, Barbara Dorr, Pat Fordice and Louise Godwin to the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center to meet with representatives of garden clubs from other states to discuss wildflower campaigns.

STATE WILDFLOWER INITIATIVE. The Clarion Ledger, June 20 (1990), described the efforts of Halla Jo Ellis and the Garden Clubs of Mississippi to establish an wildflower for the state. Coreopsis sp. has been chosen, based on a consensus of opinion, including MNPS members. The next step is getting legislators to draft and sponsor a bill in January for action in the 1991 session. Keep up the good work, Halla Jo! [sic] From MNPS Newsletter Aug. 1990

COREOPSIS SP. NAMED AS THE OFFICIAL STATE WILDFLOWER. MNPS Newsletter, May 1991 Thanks to the tireless efforts of Halla Jo Ellis and the legislators she worked with, "Coreopsis sp." is the official State Wildflowers of Mississippi. The bill takes effect July I, 1991. See the May 1990 issue for a list of the "sp" that it entails, or drop me a note for a copy of the list. [sic] *The May 1990 article referenced appears on Page 3 of this MNP&EE*.

In these articles sp. was used where spp. was intended. However, Vic Rudis, editor, described the sentiment, "My opinion is that selection of a genus, rather than a species gives people wider latitude in finding suitable habitats for planting the State's wildflower. A genus -- rather than a species -- with wide tolerance for a variety of habitats would help State agencies create the "theme" while reducing monotony in planting design." May 1990. So, *Coreopsis*, spp. is correct!

Greetings Fellow Native Plant Enthusiasts! by Dr. Lelia Kelly, MNPS President

I know spring is officially here but it doesn't feel like it right now in extreme north Mississippi. This morning, April 3rd, it was 40 degrees and even now a cold wind is blowing. But signs of spring are definitely around.

Woodland wildflowers are popping their heads out of the ground—some got nipped back by the 23 degree night temperature we had last week. Our society logo wildflower, the trillium, doesn't look too happy right now in my garden, as it got some cold damage. It is valiantly blooming its maroon (Go Dogs!) flowers above cold damaged leaves. The hardwood forest floor surrounding my home is covered with flowering violets right now. Many of you know, these plants (leaves and flowers) make a tasty snack and are full of vitamins. Much more so than iceberg lettuce! So add a handful of blossoms and young leaves to your next green salad and enjoy a nutritious flavor boost.

My bloodroot plants are budded and ready to flower. Merrybells are coming up like gangbusters in a little colony in my woodland wildflower garden. Maybe this year I will get to see my woodland phlox bloom if the voracious, evil deer will leave them alone. These plants must taste like candy to these varmints, as they are continually chomped down to the ground in early spring.

We have a new webmaster, Peggy Guyton, who took over as administrator of our society's website in late February. Thanks to Marc Pastorek and others for some great suggestions for improvement. A very heartfelt and sincere thanks goes to Tim Schauwecker, who has maintained the website for some time and has helped Peggy transition into the new role as webmaster. Thanks, Tim, for all your hard work! You should check out the new website under development. Peggy has done a beautiful job with wonders yet to come, I'm sure.

Tentative plans for the state conference are to have it in the fall at the Strawberry Plains Audubon Center in Holly Springs. If you are unfamiliar with this facility, their web address is http://strawberryplains.audubon.org. They have 3,000 acres of property and host a hummingbird festival in early September that draws 5,000 people. Their mission is education and conservation. We will post conference information on our website as it develops, so check often.

Update added on April 16th: As an MSU Extension Specialist I did a woodland wildflower program at Tishomingo State Park on April 13th. I took the opportunity to promote our society, mission and activities to the 40 attendees.

Greetings MEEA and Others, by Jennifer Buchanan, MEEA President

Happy Spring!

Spring is a glorious but busy time of year for environmental educators. Spurred on by extreme cases of spring fever, we plan outdoor adventures for our audiences, and many of our thoughts turn to Earth Day, April 22. Although different agencies design their outreach activities around a variety of relevant environmental issues, this year's theme according to the official Earth Day website is "The Many Faces of Climate Change."

Because I have spent a considerable amount of time this past year trying to wrap my head around the causes and impacts associated with climate change, I was very excited to learn that such a large environmental movement was dedicating their yearly event to the subject. I would like to encourage each of you to become involved in one way or the other in an Earth Day event. If you are an informal educator, consider hosting an event for your community to teach them about how individuals and communities can reduce their carbon footprint. If you are a formal educator, consider including your students in a hands-on stewardship activity to help connect them to nature, so that they can learn that no matter how old they are, their actions can make a positive (or negative) difference on our world.

Once your activity is planned, be sure to advertise it on the Earth Day website. Let's show the world that Mississippians care about the environment and know how to make a difference!

Please Welcome Lois Connington to the MNP&EE Editorial Staff

After Lois Connington, my new Entomology Extension Associate finished editing a 62 page booklet we produced for Project Learning Tree that provides entomological extensions for each activity in their Activity Guide, I realized how valuable her assistance would be on the editorial staff of this newsletter. Please welcome her to our staff! She has a long-term interest in environmental education and native plants.

Update on the Searchable MNPS/MEEA, Newsletter Archive Project by John Guyton, Ed.D.

Peggy has finished reformatting the newsletter archives to make them scannable OCR PDF files. They can be searched, opened and sections copied for other uses. You noticed on the front page the results of my *first* search of the archives, that was for "coreopsis." I opened a "1991" newsletter, that the search indicated contained "coreopsis," since I knew that was the date the *Coreopsis* was adopted as our state wildflower, and there on the front page was the notice pasted on the front page of this newsletter!

This past spring Dr. Charles Bryson, a charter member of the MNPS gave us his collection of newsletters and filled in several gaps in the MNPS archives we have pieced together from the collections maintained by Bob Brzuszek and Dr. Debora Mann. We believe the collection is close to complete. A sincere thanks is due these three members for their contributions.

We have been working on an index to the collection and hope to finish the collection this year. The Executive committee is discussing how to disseminate the archive. Membership is down and the cost of the newsletter is a little more than we are receiving in membership dues, so we have discussed selling the archive on CD. We have also discussed increasing membership fees and providing a copy to all members.

COREOPSIS by VIC RUDIS [reprinted from the May 1990, Mississippi Native Plant Society Newsletter.

The word on the street is that Coreopsis is the all-time favorite plant for selection as the State's "official" wildflower. Here's some background information on 10 species found in Mississippi, and a handy reference for gardeners (from personal experience, as well as H.W. Rickett 1967 Wild Flowers of the U.S., Vol. II. McGraw-Hill Book Co., and other sources):

	Major flowering time							Height
	Α	M	_ J ¯	J	Α	S	0	2" 6" 1' 2' 3' 4' 7' 10'
C. auriculata	х	х	х					
C. nudata	х	x						
C. lanceolata		x	х					
C. grandiflora		x	x	x				
C. major		х	х	x	X	x	X	
C. verticillata			х	x				
C. pubescens			x	х	х	x		
C. tinctoria			x	x	x	x		Rectangular Snip
C. tripteris				х	x	х		
C. gladiata				^	x	^	x	
					•		••	1 1

Identification:

C. auriculata Leaves with paired lobes at leaf base, generally undivided. Semi-evergreen.

C. nudata Leaves threadlike, or rushlike, round in cross-section, generally undivided. Wet areas. Flowers rose-purple.

C. lanceolata Leaves smooth, narrow, mostly near the base, generally undivided. Semi-evergreen.

C. grandiflora Similar to *C. lanceolata*, but upper leaves more often divided, leaf segments narrower, and flowers frequently semi-double. Seeds widely available. Evergreen.

C. major Leaves palmately divided into 3 narrow segments, 10-30 mm wide.

C. verticillata Leaves palmately divided, thread-like segments, under 2 mm wide. Deciduous. Leaves hairy, ovate or lanceolate, leaves lower-stalked, generally undivided. Evergreen. Leaves pinnately divided into very narrow segments also pinnately divided. Also known as *Calliopsis*, an annual. Seeds widely available. Evergreen, winter annual. Plant in fall.

C. tripteris Leaves stalked, divided into 3 or 5 narrow leaf segments, opposite leaves or rarely alternate. Flowers anise-scented.

C. gladiata Leaves at or near stem base, outer bracts short and triangular. Alternate leaves more than 15 mm wide and 7 mm long, generally undivided.

* Several cultivars available, each with varying heights. "Moonbeam", at 1-2 ft., is the most popular; leaves are described as fern-like. Propagation is by division. Of the 10, all but *Coreopsis tinctoria* are perennial. All except *C. tripteris* and *C. gladiata* can be found in the nursery trade. *C. grandiflora* is widely available as seeds and plants. Flowers are generally a vibrant yellow.

Some occur with maroon or red zones toward the flower's center. -- VIC RUDIS

The sketch of *Coreopsis nudata* is from Sidney McDaniel's collection of drawings and was published in the May 1990 Mississippi Native Plant Society Newsletter.



MEEA Celebrates the Life and Work of Hilda Hill, one of Mississippi's Early Environmental Educators by Dr. John Guyton

Hilda Lee Lackey Hill, 83, of New Albany, Miss., died November 24, 2012 at Sanctuary Hospice House in Tupelo. She was born September 7, 1929 to Norf Labon and Ruby Burson Lackey.

Hilda made it her mission to know what was going on around her and to engage and involve others who were in the vanguard of the environmental education movement. She was alert, involved and engaging, and she knew how to create a groundswell of support. I met her while I was teaching an Alternative Energies course at Wood College in the late 70's. She may have been the first person to refer to me as an "environmental educator," and she was sure I wanted to help her with an important mission. Hilda was the first "environmental educator" I knew.



She came to Wood, unannounced, to enlist my help writing congressmen encouraging them to build two environmental education (EE) centers on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, and she knew where they needed to be. The northernmost center is close to where the two rivers connected and the southernmost lies before the Tombigbee flowed into Alabama. Construction was underway on the Tenn-Tom Waterway and Hilda was there to make sure the US Army Corps of Engineers complied with their agreement to build two EE centers so children could see what the river was like before and learn about nature along its banks. When I mentioned to her that eight years earlier, with a group of high school friends, I had canoed the river from Columbus to Mobile, she said, "Then you will help." And, I joined Hilda in this pursuit pecking out letters to legislators on an old Underwood typewriter. Hilda's vision became a reality at Crows Neck and Plymouth Bluff Environmental Education Centers. Thoughts of Hilda, her passion, her capacity to form alliances and forward thinking came flooding back during the Christmas holiday when looking at the much more recent 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center built where the Mobile (into which the former Tombigbee River flows) Tensaw, Apalachee and Blakeley Rivers flows into the Mobile-Tensaw delta. She would have loved that center!

Hilda began her career as a television personality with WTWV in Tupelo, Mississippi as the "Colonel's Cook." Later, she became a teacher. Hilda taught in New Albany, at Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville, and she served as a professor and Dean of Students at Blue Mountain College. Hilda finished her professional career as a US Department of Agriculture coordinator responsible for outreach and public relations.

When Hilda focused on environmental education she was selected to lead in the development of a project sponsored by Three Rivers Environmental Educational Cooperative. Hilda, with the Northeast Mississippi Community College development team, was successful in proposing a project that eventually became Crow's Neck Educational Center.

Yard Flora Challenge! by Dr. Lucas C. Majure

The other day I was playing in my yard with my nine-month-old son and was admiring all of the spring ephemerals and other plants that were



Picture of Columbus Lock and Dam under construction behind where the Plymouth Bluff Environmental Education Center is today. Taken from below the dam which is in the waterway today. Photo by J. Guyton 1978.

starting to bud out and flower. As do most botanists in the temperate zone, I wait all winter long for a chance to get out and see something, anything, green!! However, I started to wonder to myself, "how many species are actually in this yard." I live in town in Gainesville, FL, but I have quite a few species in my yard, as the yard has not been heavily manicured over the years (i.e., I don't have a monoculture of St. Augustine or Bahia grass like many other boring yards in town). So I set off to determine exactly how many species I could come up with, while my son proceeded to chew on leaves and dig in the dirt. I recorded those species that had not been planted and those that were either budding out or in flower. I also recorded little seedlings that had started to sprout up. After about a half hour, to my surprise, I had recorded 72 species! I originally had estimated that at most I might find 50, so I was happy to see that the yard is more diverse than I thought. My yard appears to have been located within a pine flatwoods habitat at some point in the past, as Vaccinium myrsinites (shiny blueberry), Hypoxis juncea (yellow star grass), and Houstonia procumbens (fairies footprints) still persist there. Otherwise, most things are naturalized or native weeds, but regardless, they are always a welcome sight after a depressing, cold, gray winter. I have made a list below of the species that I found in my yard. I thought it would be great to challenge our readers to get out in their yards and see how many species they can find!! I believe that you will be quite surprised at the diversity and may even find some real jewels like Ophioglossum (Adder's tongue) or the amazingly tiny Lepuropetalon spathulatum (petite plant). Below are photos of two, early spring, Mississippi native species, Ophioglossum crotalophoroides, which is common in well manicured lawns and cemeteries, and Houstonia procumbens, which is more common in sandy pine flatwoods or pine sandhills.



Ophioglossum crotalophoroides (bulbous adder's tongue)



Houstonia procumbens (fairies footprints)

This is the list of the species I found in my yard

Acalypha gracilens (threeseed mercury)

Acer rubrum (red maple)
Albizia julibrissin (silk tree)

Ampelopsis arborea (sweet pepper vine)

Aphanes microcarpa (parsley piert)

Bidens alba (romerillo)

Callicarpa americana (beauty berry)

Carex sp.

Celtis laevigata (hackberry)

Cinnamomum camphorum (Camphor tree)

Conyza canadensis (horseweed) Crepis pulchra (hawksbeard) Cyperus croceus (flatsedge)

Desmodium incanum (zarzabacoa comun)

Dichondra carolinensis (ponysfoot) Drymaria cordata (whitesnow)

Eremochloa ophiuroides (centipede grass)

Erigeron quercifolius (oakleaf fleabane)

Galium aparine (bedstraw)
Galium pilosum (hairy bedstraw)

Gamochaeta falcata (purple everlasting)

Houstonia procumbens (fairies footprints)

Hypoxis juncea (yellow star grass)
Koelreuteria elegans (golden rain tree)

Lactuca graminifolia (grassleaf lettuce)

Ligustrum lucidum (glossy privet)

Linaria canadensis (toadflax)

Macfadyena unguis-cati (cat claw vine)

Medicago lupulina (black medick)

Melothria pendula (Guadeloupe cucumber)

Oldenlandia corymbosa (flat-top mille grains)

Oldenlandia uniflora (clustered mille grains)

Oplismenus hirtellus (basket grass)

Oxalis corniculata (creeping woodsorrel)

Parthenocissus quinquefolius (Virginia creeper)

Paspalum notatum (Bahia grass)

Paspalum setaceum (thin paspalum)
Phyla nodiflora (turkey tangle fogfruit)
Phyllanthus tenellus (leaf-flower)

Phytolacca americana (pokeweed)

Plantago lanceolata (narrowleaf plantain)
Plantago virginica (Virginia plantain)
Pleopeltis polypodioides (Resurrection fern)

Poa annua (annual bluegrass)

Polypremum procumbens (juniper leaf)
Prunus caroliniana (Carolina laurel cherry)

Prunus serotina (black cherry)

Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium (rabbit tobacco)
Pyrrhopappus carolinianus (Carolina desert chicory)

Qerucus nigra (water oak)

Quercus hemisphaerica (diamond leaf oak)

Quercus virginiana (live oak)

Richardia brasiliensis (tropical Mexican clover)

Sabal palmetto (palmetto) Sagina decumbens (pearlwort) Salvia lyrata (lyre leaf sage) Sida rhombifolia (Cuban jute)

Sisyrinchium rosulatum (annual blue-eyed grass)

Smila bona-nox (saw greenbrier)
Smilax glauca (cat greenbrier)

Solanum americanum (black nightshade)

Sonchus oleraceus (sowthistle)

Spermacoce assurgens (woodland false buttonweed)

Sporobolus indicus (smut grass)

Stachys floridana (Florida hedgenettle)

Stellaria media (chickweed)

Stenotaphrum secundatum (St. Augustine grass)

Tradescantia ohiensis (bluejacket)

Triodanis perfoliata (Venus looking glass) Vaccinium myrsinites (shiny blueberry)

Vicia floridana (Florida vetch)

Youngia japonica (Oriental false hawksbeard)

I spent the summer traveling... I got halfway across my backyard – Louis Agassiz

Africanized Bee Alert

Spring has arrived and it is time to move outdoors in the southeast, and an Africanized bee advisory is warranted. Since most of you are environmental educators and gardeners you need to know Africanized bees have been reported in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida and Alabama. Two colonies have been destroyed in Mississippi. It is no longer "if" they make it to Mississippi, it's "when" they will become established. I am hoping our exterminators can trump the swarms for a few more years, but I am realistic and know how hard it is to hold back the tide.

If you encounter a hostile or overly defensive honeybee colony:

- 1. Run.
- 2. Cover your head with your shirt or jacket while running because bees tend to sting the face and head.
- 3. Seek shelter immediately in an enclosed building or vehicle. Isolate yourself from the bees.
- 4. If you have been stung and breathing is becoming laborious call 911 and/or head for the hospital immediately. And finally, tell someone such as the county director at your local Extension Service office.

For more information search for MSU Gloworm online and download Volume XX No. 1, February 2013. There is an excellent article by Dr. Jeff Harris, Mississippi's new Bee Specialist.

Fieldtrip to Meadowmakers Wildflower Seed Farm/Lipkin Hill Botanic Area

Dr. Charles M. Allen, of Native Ventures, http://www.nativeventures.net/, and Marc Pastorek will lead a field trip through Meadowmakers' wildflower seed fields on May 4 in the Henleyfield community, Carriere, Mississippi. Carriere is along the river road along the Pearl River on the Mississippi side (across the river from Washington Parish, La). The trip through the ten acre field will start at 10:00 a.m.

It is a joint field trip by the Mississippi and Louisiana Native Plant Societies. We will partake in a bring-your-own picnic lunch, at Meadowmakers, under the cool shade of large oak trees (with refreshments provided), and then we'll head to Lipkin Hill Botanical area in the Old River Wildlife Management Area, a few miles away.

Lipkin Hill is the most southern bluff along the east edge of the Pearl River, representing Appalachia, with populations of native camellia, *Stewartia malacodendron*, Pyramid and Cowcumber Magnolia and many other uncommon woody and herbaceous species. The large west facing bluff on Lipkin Hill drops down to a Tupelo-Cypress floodplain of the Pearl where a turn-of-the-century rail bed for an old logging spur can still be made out.

The Lipkin Hill botanical area was a destination that until recently, could not be reached due to excessive timber fall from Hurricane Katrina (the eye of Katrina went right over us). However, the path is now clear. And the walk into the site is not difficult; just a quarter mile or so walk to hike in.

To get to Meadowmakers Farm, you can GPS #70 Fox Run North, Carriere, Mississippi or: **From Bogalusa, LA:** Go east on Mississippi Highway 26, about three miles to Highway 43. Turn right, toward Picayune. Go about five miles and on the right you will see Fortenberry's slaughter house (they've got some good farm-raised Australian deer sausage products). Once you've passed Fortenberry's, you'll pass the Baptist Church on the right and 300 feet past the church will be a road to the left, Charles Daughdrill Rd. Take the left here and proceed for a 1/4 mile when the road splits. Take a hard left here and go about a mile until the road dead-ends at a stop sign. Turn right at the stop sign and follow the road (Carrie Byrd Rd.) for a quarter mile to Fox Run North, on the right. Once on Fox Run, go straight for 300 ft to the entrance gate of Meadowmakers. **From Poplarville, MS**, go west on Mississippi Highway 26. Go approximately 15 miles on 26 until you come to Highway 43. Take a left toward Picayune (south) and follow the directions from above.

Spring is the Season for a Romantic Violet Tea

The violets in our yard are blooming! I thought about adding a candied violet recipe and decided on a romantic tea. Pick violets midmorning after the dew has evaporated and before the sun evaporates their essential oils. After gently cleaning add 2 to 3 tablespoons of flowers to a cup of boiling water and allow to steep for 5 minutes before straining and serving. Serve cupcakes, topped with candied violet, for a late morning brunch. Paint carefully washed violet flowers with room temperature egg whites and sprinkle with fine sugar. Allow to dry on plastic wrap. Violets were, after all, the traditional Valentine Day flower!

Violet teas are also reportedly useful for relieving congestion, bronchitis, sore throats and other respiratory problems.

Mississippi Native Plant Society Application The organization dedicated to the study and appreciation of native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs and trees. Join Today! New member Renewing (note any changes below) Name Address PO or Street Address City Zip Code	MS Native Plant Society mississippinativeplantsociety.org Coastal Plains MNPS meets every 4 th Monday in Gulfport. Contact President Edie Dreher at 228- 864-2775 or mail to 100 24 th St., Gulfport, MS 39507.
Individual or Family \$10	Join MNPS, MEEA or both! MS Environmental Education Alliance eeinmississippi.org The Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance conducts an annual fall conference and occasional workshops. MNP&EE Mississippi Native Plants & Environmental Education is the quarterly newsletter of the Mississippi Native Plant Society & the Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance. Deadline for Articles Winter - November 10 Spring - February 10 Summer - May 10
Watch for upcoming conference in	formation!
The MISSISIPPI NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY C/O Dr. Debora Mann Millsaps College Box 150307 Jackson, MS 39210	MS Native Plant Society

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