



Sabal texana

Volume 4, Number 8
December 1987

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THE SABAL

NATIVE PLANT PROJECT'S ENDANGERED LISTS UPDATED

Included in this issue is the long-awaited update of the Native Plant Project's Endangered, Threatened, Watch List, and Extinct Plant Species of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The list is concerned primarily with the political, four-county, lower Rio Grande Valley. The Watch List also includes several plants which have been proposed for listing in adjoining counties since they may potentially also occur in LRGV counties. There are no plans to incorporate plants from outside the usual four LRGV counties other than several Zapata County plants which have been taken under the wing of the Native Plant Project. Many of the changes in the listings were explained in The Sabal 4(4):2.

Little recognition has been given the numerous vanishing plant species of the LRGV. Land conversion for agricultural, urban, and industrial development continues apace on both sides of the Rio Grande. Former hilltop refugia in Tamaulipas, where in the past the most difficult areas to harvest such as hilltops were left undisturbed (intentionally or otherwise) as seed sources for the vegetation to migrate back down the slopes, have been cut and the wood burned to make charcoal to sell in the United States. These hilltops are now as clear of natural habitat as the agricultural fields north of the Rio Grande which serve as the example. No one at present knows if any of the plants vanishing from the north side of the Rio Grande are doing any better to the south where they face the same conversion problems. With the natural seed sources destroyed, seed cannot be carried back in by the wind or by wildlife. Two species have received official listing as Endangered and several more are mentioned as C1 (have met requirements for listing but the listing process is not yet complete) or C2 (under consideration but additional information is needed before the process can continue) candidates under consideration for listing. But many of the LRGV's most unique plant species which make the natural LRGV habitats so different from other habitat associations in Texas and the United States continue to vanish as if no one notices.

Listing is not the only method of protection and may neither be the best solution nor the most protection per dollar expended. In areas where many species are impacted, habitat protection, and as a last resort, habitat restoration, may be a better route.

Does anyone else care? Does anyone remember that the NPP was told OUR peripheral plants are OUR concern?

The revised NPP lists include 12 listed as endangered, 30 as threatened, 19 as watch list, and 4 as extinct in the four-county lower Rio Grande Valley, including the added watch list plants in the four adjoining counties. Members with records of any plant listed on one of the lists should submit the record IN WRITING to the secretary.

NATIVE PLANT PROJECT
Meeting Notice

- Date: Friday, 11 December 1987
Time: 1930 (7:30 pm)
Place: Mid-Valley Bank Community Room, 500 S. Missouri, Weslaco
Agenda: (1) Native Plant Project Board of Directors meet at 1830 (6:30 pm)
(2) Native Plant Project general meeting at 1930 (7:30 pm)
Program: Texas A&I University Citrus Center's John Fucik, a founder and past-president of the Native Plant Project, will present a program on street landscaping with ornamental native plants.
(3) The Native Plant Project's new educational slides of native trees, shrubs, herbs, and cacti, which will soon be offered for sale, will have their premier public showing.
(4) Visitors may bring plants for identification.

Secretary
Native Plant Project

Asteraceae (Aster Family)

SKELETONBUSH

Viguiera stenoloba Blake

FIELD IDENTIFICATION. Western shrub much branched a short distance above the base. Often with a rounded top, attaining a height of 4 ft.

FLOWERS. Solitary on long naked peduncles 8 in. or less; disk $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ in.; involucre bracts in 3 series, bracts ovate-lanceolate, apex abruptly linear, base strongly indurate and ribbed, surface pale and strigose-hairy; rays yellow, 10-12, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ in. long, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ in. wide; disk corolla puberulous with teeth reflexed, $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ in.

FRUIT. Achene $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ in. long, glabrous, substrate, subquadrangular, pappus none.

LEAVES. Alternate or opposite, sometimes a few linear leaves present, but generally ovate and divided almost to the center into 3-7 lobes; lobes linear-lanceolate, entire or few-toothed; attenuate, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{3}$ in. wide; dull green and strigose-tuberculate above, canescently-strigose below, over-all length 1-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. or less, width $\frac{1}{2}$ in. or less.

STEMS. Slender, gray, hairy or glabrous, nodes and leaf scars somewhat prominent; older stems with narrow ridges and shallow fissures.

RANGE. On rocky ground of the Pecos and Rio Grande river basins. In Trans-Pecos Texas, in Presidio, Brewster, El Paso, and Cameron counties. In New Mexico in Doña Ana County. In Mexico in Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas.

REMARKS. The genus name, *Viguiera*, honors L. G. A. Viguier, a physician and botanist of Montpellier, France; the species name, *stenoloba*, refers to the narrowly lobed leaves. The plant is occasionally browsed by livestock in time of stress.



Skeletonbush
Viguiera stenoloba Blake

This ornamental shrub is attractive both to the eye and to butterflies. The common name may come from the plant's resemblance to a dead plant during droughts.

ENDANGERED, THREATENED, WATCH LIST, AND EXTINCT PLANT SPECIES
OF THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS, ED. II

Endangered Species Committee
Native Plant Project

Species	Family	Range	Common Name
Published Status			

ENDANGERED			
E01	Taxodium mucronatum Taxodiaceae	Lower Rio Grande Valley, Mex.	Montezuma Baldcypress
	TNHP (yr?):G2S2; TOES 1987:Texas End.		
E02	Polianthes runyonii Agavaceae	Endemic to lower Rio Grande Valley	Runyon's Huaco
	USFWS 1983:End.; Ayensu 1978:End.; TNHP 1987:G1S1; McDonald 1987:C2		
E03	Achyranthes aspera Amaranthaceae	Hidalgo Co. into C.Am.	Chaff-flower
	TNHP 1987:G5S1		
E04	Esenbeckia runyonii Rutaceae	Cameron Co.	Jopoy
	Everitt 1976; Lonard IP:Extinct in USA?; Heep & Lonard 1986: Rediscovered; TNHP status for E. runyonii would be G1S1		
E05	Euphorbia antisyphilitica Euphorbiaceae	Big Bend (Texas) to Gro., plus Webb and Starr Cos.	Candelilla
	Everitt & Gonzalez 1976; colony in Starr Co., bulldozed all around		
E06	Ayenia limitaris Sterculiaceae	Cameron and Hidalgo Cos., Coah.	Cameron Ayenia
	TNHP 1987:G2S1; McDonald 1987:C2		
E07	Frankenia johnstonii Frankeniaceae	Endemic to Rio Grande Plains	Johnston's Frankenia
	USFWS 1984b: ENDANGERED; TPWD 1987:ENDANGERED; TOES 1987:ENDANGERED; TNHP 1987:G2S2; Ayensu 1978:End.; Ideker 1987b		
E08	Hybanthus verticillata v. platyphyllus Violaceae	Endemic to Cameron Co.	Cameron Green Violet
	TOES 1987:Sp. G4S1, Ssp. G1S1		
E09	Echinocactus asterias Cactaceae	Starr Co., Tamps., N.L.	Star Cactus
	TNHP 1987:G2S1; McDonald 1987:C2		
E10	Justicia runyonii Acanthaceae	Endemic to Tamualipan Biotic Province	Runyon's Water-willow
	Ayensu 1978:Thr.; TNHP 1987:G2S2; McDonald 1987:C2		

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- E11 *Cephalanthus salicifolius* Mexican Buttonbush
Rubiaceae Hidalgo Co. to Hond.
- E12 *Thymophylla* (ex. *Dyssodia*) *tephroleuca* Ashy Dogweed
Asteraceae Starr (?) and Zapata Cos.
USFWS 1984b: ENDANGERED; TPWD 1987:ENDANGERED; TOES 1987:ENDANGERED;
TNHP 1987:G1S1; Ayensu 1978:End.; Ideker 1987c

THREATENED

- T01 *Sabal texana* Texas Sabal Palm
Arecaceae Cameron Co. into SLP
TNHP 1987:G2S1; TOES 1987:Texas Thr.
- T02 *Tillandsia baileyi* Bailey's Ballmoss
Bromeliaceae Kenedy Co. to Guat.
TOES 1987:WL (TOES does not include Cameron & Hidalgo Cos.);
Populations still being removed by habitat clearing.
- T03 *Anthericum chandleri* Lila de los Llanos
Liliaceae Cameron Co., s.-coastal Texas, ne Mexico
TNHP 1987:G2S2; McDonald 1987:C1
- T04 *Urtica chmaedryoides* var. *runyonii* Ortiguillo
Urticaceae Endemic to lower Rio Grande Valley
TNHP 1987:Sp. G5S2, Ssp. G2S2; McDonald 1987:C2
- T05 *Pisonia aculeata* Devil's Claw
Nyctaginaceae Cameron & Hidalgo Cos. into S.Am.
TNHP 1987:G5S1; Ideker 1987a:Hidalgo Co.
- T06 *Iresine palmeri* Palmer's Bloodleaf
Amaranthaceae Cameron Co., Mex.
TNHP 1987:G3S1
- T07 *Lesquerella thamnophylla* Shrubleaf Bladderpod
Brassicaceae Starr and Zapata Counties
TNHP 1987:G1S1; McDonald 1987:C2
- T08 *Capparis incana* Santa Ana Capparis
Capparidaceae Hidalgo Co., south to?
Lonard IP:one at Santa Ana NWR
- T09 *Sedum texanum* Texan Stonecrop
Crassulaceae Endemic to Tamaulipan Biotic Province
TNHP (yr?):G2S2; USFWS 1983:End. (formerly *Lenophyllum*)
- T10 *Acacia constricta* Mescat Acacia
Mimosaceae Trans-Pecos, Starr and Zapata Cos to C. Mex.
- T11 *Mimosa wherryana* Wherry Mimosa
Mimosaceae Endemic to Tamaulipan Biotic Province
TNHP (yr?):G2S1; USFWS 1983 as *M. biuncifera*; The Sabal 4(4):3

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- T12 *Coursetia axillaris* Texas Baby-bonnets
Fabaceae Tamaulipan Biotic Province and SLP.
- T13 *Amyris madrensis* Sierra Madre Torchwood
Rutaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley to Coah. and Tamps.
TNHP 1987:G3S1
- T14 *Helietta parvifolia* Baretta
Rutaceae Starr Co. to Hgo.
TNHP 1987:G3S1
- T15 *Manihot walkerae* Tamaulipan Manihot
Euphorbiaceae Endemic to Tamaulipan Biotic Province
TNHP 1987:G1S1; USFWS 1983:End.; Ayensu 1978:End.; McDonald 1987:C1;
TOES 1987:WL; species cannot be located by committee botanists
- T16 *Mortonia greggii* Afinador
Celastraceae Rio Grande Plains to ne Mexico
- T17 *Amoreuxia wrightii* Yellowshow
Cochlospermaceae Rio Grande Plains, adj. Mex., W. Edwards Plateau
TOES 1987:WL (TOES range does not include LRGV); Ayensu 1978:Thr.;
Durant 1985:Rare (photo, p. 58); in highly disturbed areas
- T18 *Xylosma flexuosa* Brush-holly
Flacourtiaceae Rio Grande Plains to Guat.
- T19 *Echinocereus reichenbachii* v. *fitchii* Hair-covered Hedgehog Cactus
Cactaceae Webb Co. to lower Rio Grande Valley
TNHP 1987:Sp. G4S2, Ssp. G2S2; McDonald 1987:C2
- T20 *Thelocactus bicolor* v. *flavidispinus* Yellow-spined Glory-of-Texas
Hedgehog Cactus
Cactaceae Brewster and Starr Cos.
TNHP 1987:Sp. G4S2, Ssp. G2S2
- T21 *Coryphantha macromeris* var. *runyonii* Runyon's Pincushion Cactus
Cactaceae Endemic to Starr Co. and Tamps.
TNHP 1987:Sp. G3S2, Ssp. G2S2
- T22 *Heimia salicifolia* Hachinal
Lythraceae Rio Grande Plains into S.Am.
- T23 *Asclepias prostrata* Prostrate Milkweed
Asclepiadaceae Endemic to Starr and Zapata Cos. and Tamps.
TNHP 1987: G1S1; McDonald 1987:C2
- T24 *Citharexylum spathulatum* Mission Fiddlewood
Verbenaceae Endemic to Starr and Hidalgo Cos.
TNHP 1987: G2S2
- T25 *Lantana microcephala* Hammock Lantana
Verbenaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley to Guat.

- T26 *Tetramerium platystegium* Torrey's Tetramerium
Acanthaceae Endemic to Rio Grande Plains and Edwards Plateau
TNHP (yr?):G2S2
- T27 *Dicliptera assurgens* v. *vahliana* Red Dicliptera
Acanthaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley to n. S.Am.
TNHP 1987:Sp. G5S1, Ssp. G1S1; new name combination
- T28 *Chiococca alba* David's Milkberry
Rubiaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley into Trop. Am.
Labus & Ideker 1987
- T29 *Grindelia oolepis* Plains Gumweed
Asteraceae Endemic to coastal portion of Rio Grande Plains
TNHP 1987: G2S2; TOES 1987:WL
- T30 *Ambrosia cheiranthifolia* Tamaulipan Ragweed
Asteraceae Endemic to Tamaulipan Biotic Province
TNHP 1987: G1S1; McDonald 1987:C1

WATCH LIST

- W01 *Eleocharis brachycarpa* Short-fruited Spikerush
Cyperaceae Cameron and Nueces Cos., Tamps.
TNHP 1987:G1S1, perhaps extinct; McDonald 1987:C2
- W02 *Eleocharis austrotexana* Johnston's Spikerush
Cyperaceae Cameron Co., endemic to Rio Grande Plains & se. Tex.
McDonald 1984:candidate; species unknown to committee botanists
- W03 *Agave lophantha* Thorn-crested Agave
Agavaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley into Ver.
TNHP 1987:G5S1; Colonial, threatened by clearing
- W04 *Eriogonum greggii* Gregg Wildbuckwheat
Polygonaceae Hidalgo Co., to N.L. and Coahuila
TNHP 1987:G2S1
- W05 *Sesuvium trianthemoides* Roughseed Sea-purslane
Aizoaceae Endemic to Kenedy County
TNHP 1987:G1S1, perhaps extinct, C2; TOES 1987:Texas End.
- W06 *Paronychia congesta* Bushy Whitlow-wort
Caryophyllaceae Endemic to Jim Hogg Co.
TNHP 1987:G1S1, C1; TOES 1987:Texas End.
- W07 *Prunus texana* Peach Bush
Rosaceae Endemic to Rio Grande Plains and Edwards Plateau
Ayensu 1978:Thr.
- W08 *Erythrina herbacea* Coral Bean
Fabaceae SE USA to SLP.
- W09 *Adelia vaseyi* Vasey Adelia
Euphorbiaceae Endemic to Tamaulipan Biotic Province
TNHP 1987:G2S2

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- W10 *Croton soliman* Soliman
Euphorbiaceae Cameron Co. to Hgo.
TNHP 1987:G4S1; Lonard IP:one at LANWR
- W11 *Euphorbia golondrina* Boquillas Spurge
Euphorbiaceae Hidalgo, Brewster, Presidio Cos., n. Mex.
TNHP 1987:G2S2
- W12 *Cardiospermum dissectum* Rio Grande Balloon-vine
Sapindaceae Hidalgo and Starr Cos, Chih.
TNHP 1987:G2S2
- W13 *Turnera diffusa* Hierba del Veneda
Turneraceae Starr Co. thru. Trop. Am.
- W14 *Opuntia strigil* var. *flexospina* Flexible-spined Prickly Pear
Cactaceae Zapata and Webb Cos.
TNHP 1987:Sp. G3S1, Spp. G1S1; McDonald 1987:C2
- W15 *Matalea radiata* Falfurrias Milkvine
Asclepiadaceae Endemic to Brooks Co.
TNHP 1987:G1S1, C2; TOES 1987:Texas End.
- W16 *Tournefortia volubilis* Twining Tournefortia
Boraginaceae Cameron and Hidalgo Cos. into S.Am.
TNHP 1987:G5S1; only in isolated habitat islands
- W17 *Citharexylum berlandieri* Tamaulipan Fiddlewood
Verbenaceae Lower Rio Grande Valley to Ver.
- W18 *Physostegia correllii* Correll's Obedient-plant
Lamiaceae Louisiana to Son., incl. Zapata Co.
TNHP 1987:G2S2; TOES 1987:Texas End.; McDonald 1987:C2
- W19 *Parthenium incanum* Mariola
Asteraceae Starr Co., sw. TX, NM, AZ, Mex.

DEFINITIONS

- SPECIES -- includes species, subspecies, and varieties, following USFWS/End Spp precedents.
- ENDANGERED -- on verge of elimination from LRGV (Two of these are listed by USFWS and TPWD and another only by TOES).
- THREATENED -- threatened with elimination from LRGV, primarily by land conversion.
- WATCH LIST -- species proposed as threatened or endangered, but some are unknown or insufficiently familiar to the committee to be properly placed. Others are borderline and need monitoring to observe whether they continue to face a threat to their survival before the decision is made to list or delist. A few are peripheral, reaching the limits of their ranges in the LRGV.
- Sp., Spp.=Species (singular & plural); Ssp., Sspp.=Subspecies (sing. & pl.)
- TNHP STATUS CODE KEY -- G= Global, S= State, G1= <6 known populations on Earth, S1= <6 known populations in Texas, G2= 6-20 known populations on Earth, S2= 6-20 known populations in Texas, G3= 21-100 populations

globally, G4= apparently secure globally, G5= demonstrably secure globally. Example: G1S2 = <6 known populations on Earth, 6-20 known populations in Texas.

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NATIVE PLANT PROJECT
General Meeting Minutes
13 November 1987

Vice President Chapman called the general meeting to order at 1930 and had each of the 13 members and 8 guests present introduce his/herself.

Glenn Boward made the plant-of-the-month presentation on Brush-Holly, Xylosma flexuosa. A freeze-hardy, attractive, evergreen shrub with excellent ornamental possibilities, Brush-Holly is listed as threatened in the lower Rio Grande Valley by the NPP. Germination is poor and plants grown from seeds grow slowly; Mike Heep has good results growing it from cuttings. A drawing conducted for a potted Brush-Holly plant was won by Lynette Scribner who declined it; Annamay Smith won on redrawing.

Vice President Chapman introduced the featured speaker, James Chapman, one of the founders of the NPP. He showed slides of irrigation canals, drainage ditches, and floodway channels which had unnecessarily been denuded of vegetation. Potential reeducation of the officials responsible for these "crimes against nature" is confounded by the proliferation of drainage and irrigation districts in the LRGV; each must be dealt with individually.

Districts argue that they have to maintain ditches to carry water, they need access for equipment, and adjacent landowners fear brush near their fields harbors pests. Some rights-of-way are owned by the districts and others are easements on privately-owned land.

Vegetation on the outside of the ditch does not interfere with water flow. The outside on at least one side of the ditch can usually easily be left vegetated. The other side may be cleared for access of equipment to the inside of the ditch if necessary. Native brush in rights-of-way is poor habitat for overwintering crop pests (most of which are exotics and overwinter on crop residues and disturbed sites), but excellent overwintering habitat for native beneficials (which consume crop pests). Revegetating canal, ditch, and floodway banks would provide habitat the equivalent of several times the size of SANWR.

Larry Fowler suggested that the NPP focus on reversing drainage clearing through reeducation of district officials on the preservation values of native brush habitat. A committee including Chapman and Fowler could be appointed to pursue this aspect.

Following the program, Vice President Chapman made several announcements:

The Lloyd Bletsch Memorial Program (Valley Nature Center, Thursday, 19 November 1987) includes nature trail walks at 1730, and a program at 1830, followed by the Frontera Audubon Society general meeting at 1930.

Bird Rescue's Bill Oliver fund-raising concert will be at the McAllen Civic Center on 5 December. The Valley Nature Center will host its annual Christmas Open House on 5 December, Frontera Audubon Society's barbecue will be held in conjunction with it at 1100.

Dr. John Fucik will speak on street landscaping with natives at the Native Plant Project's December general meeting at the Mid-Valley Bank on 11 December 1987 at 1930.

Vice President Chapman adjourned the meeting at 2047.

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NATIVE PLANT PROJECT
Board of Directors Minutes
13 November 1987

Vice President Chapman called the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Native Plant Project at the Mid-Valley Bank in Weslaco to order at 1842. Eight directors (James Chapman, John Fucik, DeWayne Hodges, Joe Ideker, Bill MacWhorter, Robert W. Schumacher, A. Clayton Scribner, and Lynette Scribner) attended.

Hodges objected to the reference to the NPP being basically apolitical in the previous minutes and discussion ensued. FUCIK MOVED, CHAPMAN SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER MINUTES AS DISTRIBUTED; MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The treasurer's report was distributed showing a balance of \$1,553.68. Hodges asked about sales tax exemption. After much redundant discussion, it became clear that the NPP is exempt, needs no number, and supplies a certificate of exemption in lieu of sales tax.

The field trip on 21 November to the Santa Margarita Ranch will be another combination birding and plant/habitat field trip; details were in The Sabal 4(7).

Fucik discussed his draft guide for landscaping with the Valley's native plants. No copies were available. The sheets on various forms (trees, shrubs, etc.) list names, information, information sources, etc., and are to be made available at the VNC and sold at a nominal cost. Fucik will continue to work on it.

(to be continued another day)



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December 1987

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