



# THE DOCENT NEWS

Of The Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Docent Program



The Nature Conservancy  
SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

AUGUST 2007

For the Volunteers and Supporters of the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

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## THE PASSION FLOWER

—Van Vives

Carmine Briggs and her two children were riding around the prairie so her daughter could take pictures of the flowers. They came across a vine with a large frilly flower and brought it to me to see if I could identify it. The plant is the Passion Flower, *PASSIFLORA INCARNATA*. The plant is a vine and the flower is an intricate bloom that is white to lavender. The flower gives off a strong sweet smell, but too long a smell becomes a bit unpleasant. The fruit is a green seed pod about the size of a chicken egg, and the fruit is sometimes called a Maypop. It got that name from the popping sound it makes when one stomps on it.



Passion Flower  
by Van Vives

The Spanish missionaries in the 15th and 16th centuries discovered the flowering vine and gave it its name as a symbol of the Crucifixion of Christ. The 72 radial filaments (corona) represent the Crown of Thorns, the ten petals and sepals represent the ten faithful apostles, the 3 stigmata represent the 3 nails, and the 5 anthers represent the 5 wounds. In Spain the flower is known as Espina de Cristo (Christ's Thorn) and in Ger-

many it was known as Muttergottes-Schuzchen (Mother-of-God's-Star). In Japan it is known as the Clock-faced-flower and recently has become a symbol for homosexual youths. (Reference: Wikipedia)

The fruit is edible and the plant has been used for many medicinal purposes. I am famil-



Passion Flower Seed Pod  
by Van Vives

iar with the fruit as I come from southern Louisiana and ate quite a few in my youth. The pods are full of seeds which have a gelatinous cover and this is what one eats. The initial taste is pleasantly sweet, but if one eats too much the taste can become quite nauseous.

The fresh or dried leaves are used to make a tea which is used to treat insomnia, hysteria, epilepsy, and pain. The roots of the plant have also been used medicinally. It is said that it has some effectiveness in treating anxiety disorder.

In the Victorian era the Passion Flower was highly prized as a decorative flower and many hybrids were created. Hundreds of hybrids were created resulting in species of different colors.

## VISITOR COUNTS

—Iris McPherson

Here's the rundown on the number of visitors we had at the prairie in June. There were 737 visitors for the month. Oklahoma led the way, as usual, with 401. The top three states were Texas (48), Kansas (31) and Arkansas (23). The counts for the top four places for the year to this point are the same four states: Oklahoma (1473), Texas (124), Kansas (89) and Arkansas (78). There were three guests from Hawaii this month, so Delaware, North Dakota and Wyoming are the only states still not represented this year. Visitors from South Korea and Thailand were the first representatives from their countries in the twelve months, since I've been doing



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the counts. There were visitors from eleven countries in June with the leaders being England (9), Germany (8) and Switzerland (5). There have been 150 foreign visitors this year with Germany in the lead with 43.

There were some interesting comments on the sign-in sheets. Some of you may remember an intern who worked with us for a couple of years, Eric Huerter. He visited from Stillwater and his comment was "Reminiscing". Another comment was from a woman who was visiting from Washington for an unusual reason: "Here to scatter some ashes of Gerry Hyatt Bergstrom." This is a comment from another visitor from Washington, which reinforces our reason for being docents: "The information fellow was wonderful, really knew his stuff."

Van Vives had some visitors one day when he worked who were related to the Barnard family. The man and his two grown children had visited the ranch three or four times while it was still a working ranch and Ben Johnson, Sr. was foreman. They were able to participate in working activities, such as going on a roundup and riding horses. A highlight was eating at the ranch table with all the hands. It's always interesting to talk to someone who had contact with ranch when it was still working.

If you have some especially interesting visitors, I encourage you to either give the information to me, and I can include some of them in this column or write an article for the newsletter yourself and send it to Andrew Donovan-Shead.

## SPECIAL VISITORS

—Van Vives

On Monday, July 23, we had some very special visitors to the TGP. The group photo shows, from right to left: Deanna Jolly of Tulsa, wife of Edward Jolly, Edward Jolly, Dr. William P. Jolly of Lawton, Linda Jolly of Rancho Mirage, CA, and Elaine Hoder, friend of Linda Jolly, also from Mirage, CA. With them are three poodles: Casey, Josie, and Napoleon. Napoleon is the gray poodle, who is blind and thirteen years old. In his youth he won the National Agility Championship.

Dr. William Jolly is the son of Willie Jolly, the sister of Frankie Barnard, the wife of H. G. Barnard. He was anxious to take a picture of his mother, in a photo on the desk in the Bunk House. He said he had fond memories

of the ranch and remembered eating with the cowboys at the long oak table. Both he and Edward remember Ben Johnson, Sr., the foreman of the ranch.

Edward Jolly is the grandson of Willie Jolly. His major memory is coming to the ranch during roundup when he was ten years old to help his Uncle Horace. He saddled up his horse and rode away with Uncle Horace, but the horse took a deep breath and he found himself hanging onto the saddle under-



neath the horse. This was an embarrassing moment for him, but Uncle Horace thought it was hilarious.

Linda Jolly is the granddaughter of Willie Jolly and raises and trains poodles. Elaine Hoder is a good friend of Linda.

## NO TRASH SERVICE

At the Visitor's Center there is no trash service, therefore please carry away your trash for disposal at home. White plastic kitchen trash bags should be available in one of the sink-unit cupboards, to replace filled bags in the waste baskets.

## NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION

Deadline for submission of articles for inclusion in the newsletter is the 10th of each month. Publication date is on the 15th. All docents, Nature Conservancy staff, university scientists, philosophers, and historians are welcome to submit articles and pictures about the various preserves in Oklahoma, but of course the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in particular.

## NEWSLETTER BACK ISSUES

Back issues of the Docent Newsletter, to October 2006, can be found in the two green zip-binders, stored in the Perspex rack by the file cabinet in the office of the Visitor's Center.



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