

**ARLINGTON  
CONSERVATION  
COUNCIL**

**POSTOAK**

**WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES**

**VOLUME 11, NUMBER 9**

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## October Meeting

### Towards a New Urban Ecology at UT-Arlington

**David Hopman**  
Associate Professor  
Landscape Architect  
UTA Program in Landscape Architecture

**Wednesday, October 13, 7 pm**  
**Fielder Museum**  
**1616 W. Abram St**  
**(corner of Fielder and Abram)**



**David Hopman is our kind of professor: He loves native plants and sees them as vital to functional urban landscapes. Don't miss this one!**

**Remember to bring something for the raffle**

## Bits & Pieces

### Snake in the Leaves

We're about to get a fresh crop of dead leaves, and that makes us think of another member of the Arlington Invisibles Club, the copperhead. Except for a few water moccasins (maybe), this is just about our only venomous snake, and it's essentially gone from our older neighborhoods.



### Today's Inspirational Moment



"Winter is an etching, spring a watercolor, summer an oil painting and autumn a mosaic of them all."

*Stanley Horowitz*

### Very Sperry

From the October 9 Star-Telegram: The Garden Guru tells us that "...it's more critical that you choose adapted plants instead of insisting on Texas natives that may (or may not) like the climate and conditions in our part of a big state." Is it ignorance? Willfulness? Or just money from the big nurseries?



### Texas League of Conservation Voters



Find lots of good stuff at <http://www.tlcv.org/>, including a scorecard showing how our elected state officials vote on environmental issues. For example, last year Diane Patrick earned a solid D, while Wendy Davis received an A.

# A Natural History of Arlington, Texas

This is the first installment of an occasional series intended to highlight the unique biological features of our city. While many radical “environmentalists” bemoan the apparent loss of natural areas as we strive to improve the quality of life for sports fans and car dealers, it is obvious that progress and nature coexist happily in our Playful City.

As a clear example, we are proud to report the discovery of a hitherto unknown tree species recently discovered thriving in a previously unexploited Arlington niche:

**Name:** *Mimosa incarcerata*

**Distribution:** Exists as a small, isolated population in a seemingly abiotic situation in South Arlington.

**Habitat:** West-facing intersection of vertical and horizontal concrete surfaces.

**Remarks:** A survey of similar habitat in the vicinity revealed no additional specimens of *M. incarcerata* — as well as a possibly correlated absence of cage-like structures. We may conjecture that this species might require chain-link protection during the juvenile phase, although it is difficult to imagine what those threats could be. Suggested possibilities include intoxicated automobile operators and overactive groundskeepers. No other threatening megafauna would be expected in this plant community.



**THE POST OAK**

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John Darling, Editor  
 1316 S. Pecan St., Arlington TX 76010  
 817-274-1077  
[Idarling@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Idarling@sbcglobal.net)

**Contributors**  
 Ann Knudsen, Paul Knudsen, Wesley Miller

**Proofreaders** Grace Darling, Marian Hiler

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Thanks A.C.C. for working to conserve Arlington's natural resources.

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**New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park** Photos by Wesley Miller

“Grasslands challenge our senses, calling us to open our eyes to impossibly broad horizons and then, in the very next breath, to focus on some impossibly tiny critter hidden in the grass.”

Candace Savage’s foreward to *Wild Prairie: A Photographer’s Personal Journey* by James R. Page



“...the joy of prairie lies in its subtlety. It is so easy—too easy—to be swept away by mountain and ocean vistas. A prairie, on the other hand, requests the favor of your closer attention. It does not divulge itself to mere passersby.”

Suzanne Winckler  
*Prairie: A North American Guide*



“Yet the more we love this place as it is, the more we feel the pain of what it so recently was. The wild prairie ecosystem is gone. And this tragedy is compounded by the realization that we don’t even know exactly what it is that we have lost.”

Candace Savage  
*Prairie: A Natural History*

# Wildscape Update Ann Knudsen



Dedicated volunteers attracted prospective wildscape visitors and future volunteers with colorful plants and photos on display at the second annual Arlington Ecofest. Once these unwitting souls stepped into the booth, they got the full wildscape treatment. It appears to have worked, as many promised to visit and some expressed an interest in volunteering.



We need more volunteers, especially now, because our current dedicated workers have been very busy planting all year. This fall will be no different, since fall is the best time to plant in this part of the country. Already since the last wildscape update, many more Gro-low fragrant sumacs have been added to the new area across from the triple kiosk, and we'll expect a beautiful fall display from them. There's also more Texas lantana, snakeroot and snow-on-the-mountain. All of these additions to the previous plantings will provide a beautiful change of color from spring through winter.



With the record rainfall in September, we were pleasantly surprised to see that there was no severe damage anywhere. Eroded soil from upstream has been dumped all along the creek, but much of the creek bed is recovering nicely. A tire appeared downstream, as well as the small footbridge for the seasonal wetland. Some plants near the stone bridge have been washed away, but it's nothing that can't be fixed with more planting!



Each workday some area of the wildscape has seen another installation of plants. At the northeast end, experienced volunteers recently made quick work of two carloads of plants to fill in previously planted beds. They were rewarded at the mini-class with apples, almonds, and great info from Bonnie Bradshaw on dealing with problem wildlife situations. Next month, volunteers will be treated to more fruit and nuts — and enlightenment from Arlington Parks and Recreation Department's Matt Churches, who will discuss the benefits of native trees.



## Our Last Speaker

Gailon Hardin, immediate past president of the Texas Native Plant Society, treated us to the most wonderful presentation on the virtues of native plants. In a word, it was great.



## 350.org Project: Kick the Bottle

Recently a special group formed to fight the staggering environmental wastes associated with the growth of the bottled water industry. The League of Women Voters, in collaboration with the Environmental Society of UTA and Arlington Conservation Council, offered water taste tests at Ecofest and UTA in advance of their presentation of the award-winning documentary “Tapped” on October 10 at UTA. This was the culmination of the group’s Kick the Bottle campaign to educate the public on the benefits of choosing tap water instead of bottled water, and the project is listed on environmentalist Bill McKibben’s 10/10/10 Workday site at 350.org.



*Leading up to 10/10/10: At UTA, Sarah Stephens, Chowgene Koay, and Ellen Ranit offer water taste tests and encourage pledges to give up bottled water.*

## City Hall Surrounded — by Natives



Thanks to a grant from Arlington Tomorrow Foundation, the dreary shrubs and groundcovers around city hall have been replaced by a native landscape designed by Rosa Finsley. Dustan Compton, Arlington Water Utilities Conservation Program Coordinator, is responsible for this wonderful project, and all of us wildscapers are now officially indebted to him.

## OS Gray Park Dedicated



On October 2, officials and dignitaries dedicated the long-awaited OS Gray Park before a large crowd. Maybe the most important dignitary was Kevin Donovan, who has worked tirelessly for this park from the beginning. *Left*, Kevin and Marian Hiler. *Center*, Kevin addresses the crowd. *Right*, cutting the ribbon.

### Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

Memberships are good for one year, renewable each January. Your dues go directly to our public education efforts.

#### Membership Information

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**President** Jo Ann Duman  
516-7453 [jduman@juno.com](mailto:jduman@juno.com)  
**First Vice President** Danny Kocurek  
**Second Vice President** Roy Miliner  
230-4295 [rlmiliner@tx.rr.com](mailto:rlmiliner@tx.rr.com)

**Treasurer** Marian Hiler 277-3998  
[mernhome@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mernhome@sbcglobal.net)  
**Secretary** Grace Darling 274-1077  
[darlingg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:darlingg@sbcglobal.net)  
**Editor** John Darling 274-1077  
[1darling@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1darling@sbcglobal.net)

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Arlington Conservation Council  
PO Box 216  
Arlington, TX 76004-0216

# Don't Forget!

Wednesday, October 13  
7 pm

David Hopman  
*Towards a New Urban  
Ecology at UT-Arlington*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



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