

# TEXAS PRAIRIE

FROM THE NATIVE PRAIRIES ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

## Blaze

February 1, 2018

### PRAIRIE CONSERVATION AWARENESS



#### SHELL OIL COMPANY AWARDS \$68K GRANT to NPAT's Lawther Deer Park Prairie Preserve!

In a demonstration of support of **Prairie Conservation with an emphasis on creating educational opportunities**, Shell Oil Company has awarded a **\$68K Grant to NPAT**.

*Photo of Early Morning at Deer Park Prairie  
by Pauline Singleton*

This generous Grant will fund an "**Environmental Education Coordinator**" position at **NPAT's LAWATHER DEER PARK PRAIRIE PRESERVE** in Deer Park, TX, site of one of Shell Oil Company's largest facilities. This Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating partnerships with local school districts, universities and businesses. One major role will be to **train teachers to "teach the prairie"**! [Read more](#)



### NPAT's PRAIRIE OF THE MONTH: *DAPHNE PRAIRIE* 922 Acres on the northeastern edge of the Blackland Prairie Ecoregion



Photo courtesy of Kimberley Clemons.

The Blackland Prairie Ecoregion, "**tallgrass prairie area**", once comprised the eastern portion of a much larger area referred to as The Great Plains.

In addition to the prairie and riparian zones, ***Daphne Prairie*** has some ponds and wetlands that provide habitat for insects, invertebrates, shorebirds, ducks, and aquatic or wetland reptiles, amphibian and mammals.

[Read more](#)

*Photo: Sunset at Daphne Prairie by Kimberley Clemons*

### NPAT's BIRD OF THE MONTH: *Dickcissel Spiza americana*



Photo: Dickcissel Female & Male on Mima Mound at Daphne Prairie: Pat Merkord

Stroll across a prairie anytime between late spring and early fall, and you'll rarely be out of ear shot of the **dickcissel's distinctive 'trill'**, "see-see, dick-dick, ciss-ciss-ciss". Some say they are '**meadow lark look-a-likes**' with a cardinal's stout beak, these birds throng North American grassland habitats, from the prairie pothole region of the Dakotas to the High Plains of Texas, where they feed on seeds and insects.

(For additional birds identified at Daphne Prairie, [Read more](#))

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### **NPAT's GRASS OF THE MONTH: Silveus' Dropseed *Sporobolus silveanus***

Daphne Prairie has one of the **two largest remaining examples of the unique Texas prairie 'wiregrass prairie'**, also known as **Silveus' Dropseed**.

***Sporobolus silveanus*** (named for William Arents Silveus (1875-1953), a Texas Botanist and attorney) grows in wet or sandy soils in the pinewoods or blackland prairies; native distribution in eastern TX and western LA. Diggs, Jr., George M, Lipscomb, Barney L., and O'Kennon, Robert J., 1999, **Shinners & Mahler's Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas**, Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT), Fort Worth, 1626 p.

**Plant Characteristics: Habit: Grass/Grass-like** (Having narrow leaves, usually arising from the base of the plant.) **Root Type: Fibrous** (Network of fine roots with no central dominant root.) **Leaf Arrangement: Alternate** (Placed singly at different heights on the stem; not opposite or whorled.) **Leaf Complexity: Simple** (Not divided into parts, e.g., a leaf with the blade in one piece.) **Leaf Venation: Parallel** (A leaf whose veins run in parallel from the stem.) **Fruit Type: Achene** (A dry, usually one-seeded, indehiscent fruit.), **Caryopsis** (A dry, one-seeded fruit (achene) with ovary wall united to the seed coat, characteristic of grasses.) **Size Class: 3-6 ft.** (Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center)

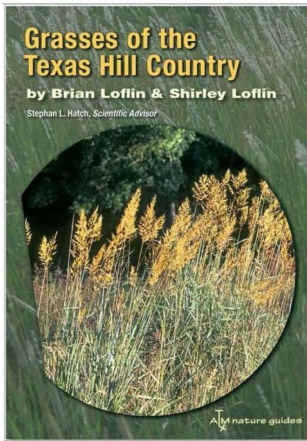


Photo by Larry Allain.

**QUESTION FOR YOU...Is a prairie different from common fields of grass? [Find out!](#)**

**NPAT's BOOK OF THE MONTH:  
GRASSES OF THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY**

Co-authors: Brian Loflin and Shirley Loflin



-A photographic guide to grasses.

-Have you been frustrated trying to identify prairie plants? This is for you!

-An '**easy-to-use**', **visually precise**, and **information-packed** "field guide" to some seventy-seven native and introduced species that grow in the Texas Hill Country and beyond!

***WE ARE ALL CONNECTED!***  
***Our actions affect many other living things!***

**NPAT's Chapters** "meet up" each month and offer opportunities to meet people with common interests! Hear talks by dedicated and highly-qualified individuals; shake their hands and meet those **who may be serving your area** in various capacities: municipal employees focusing on water conservation, people whose knowledge of practices will benefit landowners (ranchers and backyard gardeners), nature conservationists, wildlife experts, and others dedicated to **sharing knowledge of our great 'prairies'**!

***Check your calendar; take the time and meet other prairie enthusiasts!***  
***Learn more about conservation and flora and fauna in your area!***

**February 6, San Antonio Chapter** meets 1st Tues from 7-8:30pm  
**February 7, CenTex Chapter** meets 1st Wed in Georgetown from 6:30-8:30pm  
**February 12, Fort Worth Chapter** meets 2nd Mon from 6:30pm-8pm  
**February 13, Blackland (Dallas) Chapter** meets 2nd Tues from 6:30-8pm  
**February 28, Houston Chapter** meets 4th Wed from 6:30-8:30pm

**ADMISSION IS FREE!!!**

**Support Us -- Donate Now!**