

NATIVES LINK GARDENERS TO MORE THAN JUST BEAUTIFUL PLANTS

BY BOB DAILEY
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS
PINES AND PRAIRIES CHAPTER

Thousands of beautiful native plant species once covered Texas. They provided food, nectar, pollen and seeds for butterflies, honeybees, 700 species of native bees, and over 600 species of birds.

Increases in population and urbanization, as well as other causes, have significantly cut into the land in which these plants thrived. This is changing, as Texas homeowners, businesses and industrial facilities now recognize not only the beauty of these plants in the landscape, but also their value to vital species of insects and birds. Nurseries are taking note of that increased interest and have begun propagating native plants to meet those needs.

BLUE MIST FLOWER blooms July through November, grows well in shade or partial shade, and has only minimum water requirements. It grows up to 18 inches tall and looks wonderful backed by woodfern or maidenhair fern.



LANCELEAF COREOPSIS, which once covered the edges of woodlands, is now readily available. The plant grows up to two and a half feet, blooms April through June. It likes sun, partial shade, or even full shade and has medium water requirements. Planted in bunches it makes a statement in a garden.



AMERICAN CRINUM LILY Many gardeners love crinums, most of which originated in Africa. However, few know that we have a native American Crinum Lily. It likes partial shade and can grow up to 3 feet. Its striking white blooms, which it sports from June through November, are a wonderful addition to any flower garden.



INDIAN BLANKET can bloom all year. It particularly likes sun but can take partial shade. It can grow up to 2 feet and has medium water requirements.

Its bright red centered flower, with bright, yellow tips pops with color in the garden.



NATURE'S WAY
RESOURCES
an organically based service company

www.natureswayresources.com

GULF MUHLY, one of my favorites, is a fantastically showy grass, especially in the fall. It likes sun. An attractive plant year round, but the fall is showtime for Gulf Muhly. Beginning in September and throughout the fall and part of the winter, the slim stalks hold thousands of tiny pink flowers. In the wind, it appears that a pink cloud is floating above each plant.

(ALL BOB DAILEY PHOTOS)

