SFA GARDENS ANNUAL REPORT 2012

Introduction

SFA Gardens, a recognized center within Stephen F. Austin State University, is a multi-faceted public garden developed by SFA’s Arthur Temple College of Forestry and Agriculture. SFA Gardens cover 68 acres on the SFA campus—10 acres in the Mast Arboretum and Jim and Beth Kingham Children’s Garden, eight acres in the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, eight acres in the Gayla Mize Garden, and 42 acres in the Pineywoods Native Plant Center. The gardens are managed by Associate Director Dr. David Creech and 4.5 FTE staff, both professional and classified, as well as student workers. Community support is provided by a membership group (of about 200 members) and a Friends of SFA Gardens Advisory Board, which meets quarterly. While State of Texas funding assists with operations and maintenance expenses, the gardens staff raise significant funds through two plant sales per year, a robust grant-seeking effort, and four endowments that support all of the gardens but the PNPC. Currently, a major capital campaign is raising funds from private donors and Texas foundations to build a Conservation Education Center at the PNPC, with the goal of building a structure that exhibits environmentally sensitive methods of construction and operation. Plant diversity and adaptability are key in developments in each of the four main gardens, offerings in the two plant sales, and in the public outreach by staff through lectures, public events, publications, and tours. Environmental education for future generations is another main initiative that reaches over 15,000 a year in a broad spectrum of programs for ages K-adult.

The following show pictures of some of the major accomplishments or events in fiscal year 2012. Further details are included within each staff member’s section.

Goals for 2011-2012

Goals and Achievements for 2011-2012

Basic area goals are shown for the main gardens. See attached annual report document for details on accomplishments.

Mast Arboretum

Hold two plant sales to help cover salary costs in Spring and Fall—both successful.
Grow crops for plant sales.
Hold 5th Lone Star Native Plant Conference in June.

Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden

Install electricity to Council Ring area for special events.

Pineywoods Native Plant Center (PNPC)

Continue to raise funds for the Conservation Education Center to be located at the PNPC.
Grow crops for plant sales.
Host both plants sales on the PNPC property.

**Gayla Mize Garden**
Develop trails network in southern end of garden, add to plant collections and label them, plan future amenities.

**Environmental Education Program**
Design, execute, and manage 15 different environmental education programs for K-12 students and adults.

**Garden Outreach**
Increase horticultural knowledge and inform others of SFA Gardens: Hold monthly garden seminars, lecture series with invited speakers, and give presentations to a wide variety of garden societies, garden clubs, and professional organizations.

**Maintenance**
Provide best practices public garden maintenance for all 68 acres of gardens.
With the departure of Trey Anderson, PNPC Research Associate, we are now seven lean adventuresome horticulturists. Left to right: Dawn Stover, Duke Pittman, Barb Stump, Dave Creech, Kerry Lemon, Greg Grant, and Elyce Rodewald.

Trey Anderson, PNPC Research Associate, says goodbye! After moving the PNPC forward for three years, Trey takes a position as a vegetation analyst with an East Texas firm. We will miss his enthusiasm, work ethic and ready smile.

At the North end of the PNPC, we have a new boardwalk through a Hymenocallis colony. Eagle Scout Pearson Randall Project, supervised by Trey Anderson – funded by PNPC.
Three rain gardens were constructed at the PNPC under the supervision of Drs. Matthew McBroom and Yanli Zhang.

Planting day for the Rain Gardens - July 24, 2012

Gayla Mize Garden Dedication Day. April 16, 2012
At the Gayla Mize Garden we are building a small pavilion on a knoll overlooking this new bottomland garden. Spence Simmons and Andrew Bright working on the pavilion floor.

Emergency Call Boxes installed at the Mast Arboretum, Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden and Gayla Mize Garden.
This may look boring but it’s not for us. Long a dream for Barbara Stump, the council ring of the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden now has electricity for events.

Acer skutchii planting at the Science Research Center on Stallings Drive. Survival percentages and growth excellent.

Planted in 2011, the plants are drip irrigated.

Kiwi planting north of Starr Avenue bridge on the east side of LaNana creek. Germplasm provided by Dr. Jay Spiers of Auburn University for trialing. While the growth is good, the verdict is not in on fruiting.

LaNana Creek Taxodium planting was increased by over 500 trees of known genotype/provenance. Drip irrigation system installed to be employed for the first two years – to guarantee successful establishment.

In March, 2012 a N rate/N source study was installed using one of our clones – T406 (a bald cypress X Montezuma cypress cross). Undergraduate Spence Simmons problems course project.
Growth rate has been phenomenal because of drip irrigation. One gallon of water per plant per day.

SFA Community Garden makes great strides during the past year. Fruit collection includes figs, pomegranates, blueberries, citrus, and Asian pears.

Little Miss Princess Tea Party at the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden
Gardens Goals for Fiscal Year 2013

Mast Arboretum
Hold two plant sales to help cover salary and operations costs in Spring and Fall.
Conduct plant trials: national native grass trial; trials of blueberries, pomegranates, kiwis, and with the Takii Corporation, canna hardiness.
Design new Children’s Garden area on north side of Mast Arboretum by College Avenue.
Grow crops for plant sales.
Expand fruit collection in the community garden near the SFA Intramural Field.
Improve Elking Environment on southern side of Mast Arboretum.
Treat the wood in pavilion in the Jim and Beth Kingham Children’s Garden.

Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden
Replace damaged entrance sign, complete plant labeling.
Install 15 metal benches (12 in Gayla Mize Garden) and (three memorial benches in Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden)
Continue support of Nacogdoches Azalea Trail activities.

Pineywoods Native Plant Center (PNPC)
Grow crops for two plant sales.
Repair bridges and boardwalks.

Gayla Mize Garden
Surface gravel trails with recycled asphalt from Wilson Drive.
Finish pavilion in the Gayla Mize Garden, and add more unique plant collections.
Add tours of this garden to annual Azalea Trail tours.

Environmental Education Program
Complete design and construction of Ina Brundrett Conservation Education Center at the PNPC.
Continue environmental education programming, wide-ranging horticultural outreach through speaker series at SFA and in other gardening venues across the US.
Implement program assessment for all public programs.

Special Needs or Requests
1. Install a public access bathroom on the northern side of the Mast Arboretum.
2. Improve accessibility issues on southern end of the Mast Arboretum.
3. Purchase a new Gator to replace 15-year old one.
4. Purchase a small Kubota tractor.
David L. Creech - Director

International

August 22- - Sept 13, 2011. China. Research collaboration with Professor He Shanan and Yu Hong, Nanjing Botanical Gardens (blueberry research and extension), and 2) with Professor Yin Yunlong, Nanjing Botanical Garden (urban tree research).

Jun 14 – Jul 3, 2012 – Consultancy to China, collaboration with Professor Yin Yunlong of the Nanjing Botanical Garden with primary focus on Taxodium improvement.

Jul 26 – Aug 7, 2012 – China and continuing collaboration with Professor Yu Hong of the Nanjing Botanical Garden. I facilitated the visit of Dr. Stephen Stringer, USDA blueberry genetecist (USDA, Poplarville, MS). Visited several blueberry farms and research plots in Jiangsu province –

Publications and Presentations


Registration of Earlibirdblue in Cultivar Registration List– a southern highbush blueberry release between SFA and USDA. 46. HortScience 47(5) :540


*refereed


Feb 14, 2012. The Natives are Restless. MG Training on Native Plants in Conore, TX. 65 in attendance.

Feb 16, 2012. The Natives are Restless. MG Training on Native Plants in Huntsville, TX. 64 in attendance.


Apr 24, 2012 – Native plants – a primer. Presentation to the Diboll Garden club, Diboll, TX – 21 in attendance.

May 17-19, 2012 – Cool Plants for a Hot Climate – Sixth Lone Star Regional Native Plant Conference hosted by SFA at student center – 61 in attendance at my talk.

Aug 16-18, 2012 – Exciting new exotics to color your landscape – presentation at the educational conference of the TX Nursery and Landscape Convention, Houston TX – 62 in attendance.


Aug 20, 2012 – Bringing color into the landscape – presentation to the Montgomery county Master Gardeners, Conroe, TX – 125 in attendance

**Tours**

Sept 17, 2011- Board of Regents tour of PNPC.

Mar 1, 2012. Tour of Azalea Garden to Nacogdoches Master Gardeners – 13 in attendance

Mar 6, 2012 – Controlled burn at the Pineywoods Native Plant Center – 27 in attendance


**Teaching**

Oct 21-25, 2011. Took four undergraduate students to IPPS Southern Region conference in Valdosta, Georgia


May 2012 – Lijing Zhou receives the PhD. Dissertation title: Salt Tolerance and Growth Variation in Genotypes and Hybrids of Taxodium distichum.


Dec 9, 2011 - Trip to Peckerwood Gardens, Hempstead, TX with four students to tour garden.
Apr 10, 2012 – Genetic improvement of ornamental plants – lecture to Dr. Jeff Adkins Plant Breeding Class, SFA, Nacogdoches, TX – 8 in attendance.

July 23, 2012 – China Connection – Lecture to SFASU’s Dr. Joe Ballenger’s International Marketing Class, SFA, Nacogdoches, TX. 17 in attendance

**Service**

Serve as member of the Executive Committee of the Southern Region American Society for Horticultural Science, Birmingham, Alabama, Feb 3-6, 2012. Beginning my term as President of SR-ASHS.

Serving as the President of the Texas Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta

December 2-4, 2011 – Expedition to Alabama to pick up plants for Gayla Mize Garden.
Greg Grant – SFA Gardens Outreach

Publications


Grant, Greg. Finally Fall. Arbor Gate Blog. November 2011.


Grant, Greg. Finally Fall. Arbor Gate Blog. December 2011.

Grant, Greg. It was a Miracle! Arbor Gate Blog. January 2012.


Total Print Circulation: 3,230,000

Presentations


October 4, 2011. “Landscaping 101” to the Montgomery County Master Gardeners in Conroe. 120 in attendance.


December 17, 2011. Radio interview on heirloom gardening with Dr. Jerry Parsons’ KLUP Plant Talk-South Texas in San Antonio.


February 22, 2012. “Plants are Essential for Life” to the Huntington Library Club in Huntington. 15 in attendance.


March 19, 2012. “Going Native” to the public in Lufkin. 75 in attendance.

April 12, 2012. “Plant Introductions” to Jeff Adkins' horticulture class. 12 in attendance.


July 17, 2012. “Propagating Native Plants” to the Angelina Master Gardener native plant group in Lufkin. 20 in attendance.

August 16, 2012. “Gardening for Love” at the SFA Gardens Lecture Series. 80 in attendance.

Tours


May 12, 2012. Garden tour to garden writer Jay White and wife. 2 in attendance.


June 14-15, 2012. Garden tour to garden writer and photographer Patty and Bruce Leander. 2 in attendance.

July 23, 2012. Garden tour to the Orange County Master Gardeners. 5 in attendance.


Total Tour Attendance: 110

Training


January 26, 2012. Attended fire training at SFA College of Forestry.


March 24, 2012. Attended the Arkansas Daffodil Show in Conway, Arkansas.

March 31, 2012. Attended the Ivy Payne Wildlife Refuge field day in Elkhart.

April 5, 2012. Attended Jeff Abt Audubon Society lecture on landscaping for the birds.


April 28, 2012. Attended the Briarwood picnic and led tour at Saline, Louisiana.


May 18-19. Attended the SFA Gardens Lone Star Regional Native Plant Conference in Nacogdoches.

June 1-3. Attended the annual Southern Garden History Society meeting in Richmond, Virginia and served on the board of directors.


August 15, 2012. Attended Hibiscus dasycalyx workshop and field trip at SFA.

Other:

July 2012. Organized volunteers and volunteered at King’s Nursery during the illness (and subsequent death) of friend and owner Aubrey King.
Elyce Rodewald – Environmental Education Programming

Presentations

Coordinated and/or presented educational programs for SFA Gardens for approximately 15,725 participants. See table below.

Highlights include weekly after-school program at Pineywoods Native Plant Center for Boys and Girls Club members, hands-on environmental education field trips for all Nacogdoches ISD elementary students grades K-5, monthly outdoor family fun days, bi-monthly garden seminars, four weeks of summer camps and five special events including participation in the Texas State Envirothon and Little Princess Tea Party.

Training

At SFA, attended Banner, P-Card, Defensive Driving Training, and Grant Workshop.

Attended Texas Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta meeting Feb 2012 in Houston.

Attended Texas Environmental Education Advisory Council training and meeting January 2012 in Austin.

Attended NAAEE conference in Raleigh, SC, October 2012

Service

Currently serve as co-chair of Pre-service Advisory Council for North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE).

Grant-Funding

Wrote and received two grants that will sustain the education program, created and supervised educational programs that netted income, and managed SFA Gardens membership drive that also netted income. (See grant descriptions, chart of programs and participants, and funding section below for specifics.)

More Kids in the Pineywoods is an in-depth conservation education program that will provide field-based science field trips for 3,200 K-5 public school children; weekly outdoor experiences for 60 at-risk youth (ages 6-12); monthly field trips and outdoor activities for 75 underserved families; and 4 week-long day camps for 60 youth (ages 4-15). These meaningful and sustained outdoor programs will use service learning, citizen science, interaction with resource professionals, hands-on activities, experiential learning, outdoor skills, and critical thinking to
help children make connections with nature. Six traditional and four non-traditional partners will provide programs, instruction, experiences and field trip locations. Nacogdoches Independent School District (NISD) and Boys and Girls Club of Nacogdoches will provide primary populations for the projects.

MKIW funds requested: $41,677 Total project funds: $90,747

Participants will increase knowledge of forest ecology and the importance of forests in our lives, increase participation in healthy outdoor physical activities, and demonstrate an enhanced connection to nature. The project will provide field trip experiences for all NISD K-5 classes, 64 events for the after-school program, 14 events for the family program, and 20 days of day camp. Programs include visits to the SFA Experimental Forest, Angelina NF, Davy Crockett NF & Sabine NF as well as instruction and experiences in forest ecology/stewardship, careers in resource management, angler education, canoeing, Dutch oven cooking, orienteering, Leave No Trace principles, hiking, camping, and Project Learning Tee

Educational Programming: September 1, 2011 – August 31, 2012

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Barbara S. Stump – SFA Gardens Development

Publications


Presentations

October 4, 2011. Stump, Barbara. Getting to Know Camellias. Banquet presentation to the Gulf Coast Camellia Society, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. 80 in attendance.


March 17, March 24, March 31, April 7, 2012. Stump, Barbara and two SFA Gardens volunteers each date. In-garden docents during Nacogdoches Azalea Trail. Estimated 400-600 visitors for the period.


**Tours**


**Other Major Projects**

Large format entrance signage for SFA Recreational Trails and Gardens, Gayla Mize Garden, Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden (in progress).

**Grants**

Wrote grant requesting $150,000 for design and construction of Conservation Education Center at the SFA PNPC from the Brown Foundation in Houston; awarded early in FY 2012.

**Service**

President of the Friends of Music, a support group for the SFA School of Music, which included several major fund-raising events.

National board member for the Azalea Society of America, including attendance at the national American Rhododendron Society-Azalea Society of America convention in Asheville, North Carolina.
Dawn Stover – SFA Mast Arboretum Research Associate

**Presentations and Tours**

September 8, 2011 – Plant Sale Preview presentation - Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners Lunch and Learn Series. 75 in attendance

September 14, 2011 – Houston Seniors Group arboretum tour. 30 in attendance


November 9, 2011 – SFA ECRC Kindergarten tour and scavenger hunt. 25 in attendance.

November 30, 2011 – guest lecture SFA Floriculture class – wreath making. 30 in attendance


January 21, 2012 – Coordinate volunteer effort to plant vegetable seeds in the SFA Sustainable Community Education Garden (SFASCEG). 15 in attendance.

February 8, 2012 – presentation to SFA Forestry Campus Ecology class about potential and opportunities in SFASCEG. 20 in attendance

February 9, 2012 – Propagation lecture and workshop with Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners. 30 in attendance.

March 3, 2012 – Organize and host Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo invitational FFA Nursery and Landscape Career Development Event. 200 in attendance


March 20, 2012 – Annuals and Perennials short course for Nacogdoches County Master Gardeners. 30 in attendance

March 28, 2012 – Harrison and Gregg County Master Gardener arboretum tour. 10 in attendance
March 29, 2012 – Smith County Master Gardener arboretum tour. 20 in attendance

March 30, 2012 – Mercer Arboretum Society arboretum tour. 50 in attendance

April 3, 2012 – Organize and host SFA invitational Nursery and Landscape Career Development Event. 150 in attendance.

April 5, 2012 – Kilgore Garden Club arboretum tour. 20 in attendance

June 20, 2012 – “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About the SFA Gardens” – presentation to San Augustine Rotary. 20 in attendance

**Major Projects and Events Organized**

October 2011 - Fabulous Fall Festival – plant sale/fundraiser ($24,700)

November 5, 2011 SFA Gardens Fall Fandango

Garden Gala Day April 2012 – plant sale/fundraiser ($42,689)

Lone Star Regional Native Plant Conference

SFA Sustainable Community Education Garden