NewsNote

A Periodic Note for State PLANTS Coordinators

6 May 2005

In This Issue:

1. Plant Characteristics for 45 Plants Added to PLANTS and VegSpec

Plant Characteristics data for forty-five plant species useful in riparian area conservation and a Riparian Buffer practice have been added to PLANTS and VegSpec. Species selection was based upon Information from NRCS Plant Materials Specialists, NRCS publications, and other scientific literature. John McCoy of the USGS National Wetlands Research Center developed and verified the VegSpec-Plant Characteristics attribute values for each species. Examples include: *Annona glabra* (ANGL4), *Cyrilla racemiflora* (CYRA), *Halesia diptera* (HADI3), or *Symplocos tinctoria* (SYTI). For more information, contact James Henson at james.henson@la.usda.gov.

Symplocos tinctoria

2. Native Plants Journal Articles Address Plant Nomenclature Issues

NPDC staff member Mark Skinner and Kas Dumroese of the U.S. Forest Service recently co-authored an article in the spring 2005 *Native Plants Journal* entitled "*Rhexifolia* versus *Rhexiifolia*: Plant Nomenclature Run Amok?" The article discusses how the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature has specific procedures for naming plants with novel compound epithets. The code corrects compound epithets, like *rhexifolia*, that were incorrectly combined. The article also addresses why *rhexiifolia* is now preferred. To access the article, visit http://nativeplants.for.uidaho.edu/Content/Articles/6-1NPJ59-61.pdf.

Another article of interest in the spring 2005 issue is entitled "Why are Plant Names Changing So Much?" This article, authored by Alan S Weakley, offers explanations of why plant scientific names continue to change, seemingly at a faster rate than ever. To access this article, visit http://nativeplants.for.uidaho.edu/Content/Articles/6-1NPJ52-58.pdf.

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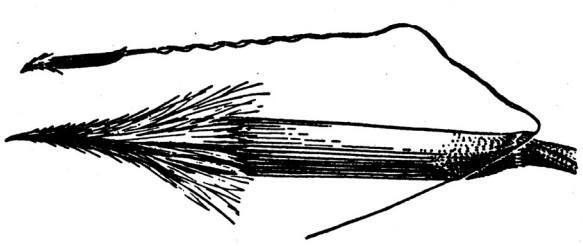
3. New Grasses of Southern Oklahoma and North Texas Reference Book

A new comprehensive reference book called *Grasses of Southern Oklahoma and North Texas: A Pictorial Guide* is now available. For more information or to order go to http://www.noble.org/Storefront/AgStore/Product.asp?ProductID=NF-FO-04-01



Piptochaetium avenaceum

4. On-line Automated Plant Identification Keys

Many Web sites offer assistance in plant identification, sometimes through automated keys. These keys generally tend to be of two types: dichotomous or polyclave. A dichotomous key, similar to your state flora, utilizes a series of questions (couplets) with two-option answers. As the user selects one option or the other, the key gradually narrows the possibilities to the identified plant. Unfortunately, like hard copy floras and manuals, floristic dichotomous keys generally depend on flower parts, so precise identification is accomplished only while the plant is in flower. On the other hand, a polyclave key allows you to enter multiple characteristics, which can be of great assistance if you are trying to identify a plant without flowers present.

Some automated keys require downloading executable files, which makes them difficult to use on CCE machines. Others are used entirely on-line, such as the following ActKey polyclave keys. The willow key should be especially useful.

Salix (Willows) of North America
http://flora.huh.harvard.edu:8080/actkey/actkey.jsp?setId=3390

Families of Angiosperms (Flowering Plants)
http://flora.huh.harvard.edu:8080/actkey/actkey.jsp?setId=100

Brassicaceae (Mustard) Genera of the World
http://flora.huh.harvard.edu:8080/actkey/actkey.jsp?setId=2051

The NPDC is currently working with the NRCS Information Technology Center to determine if current versions of the following keying software are compatible with CCE machines: INTKEY, Navikey, XID, Lucid Reader, and SLIKS. We will keep you posted in the coming months on our progress. In the mean time, links to automated keys can be found on the PLANTS Home Page – Links – Plants & Names – Automated ID Keys. Or, here is a sampling of and information on additional keys available on the Web:

1. http://delta-intkey.com/www/netid.htm
2. http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/keys/sliks/
3. http://web.aces.uiuc.edu/weedid/
4. http://www.agriliance.com/images/WEED_ID.PDF
5. https://timssnet.allenpress.com/ECOMWSSA/timssnet/products/tnt_products.cfm - (Note: if this link does not work, go to www.wssa.net and then click on “Order 1000 Weeds of N. America” under News and Headlines.)

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Your Feedback is Requested

Please send comments regarding PLANTS, NPDC NewsNote, or other plant-related issues to <rebecca.noricks@la.usda.gov>. Archived versions of NPDC NewNotes are available on the NPDC Web site at http://npdc.usda.gov, on the State Coordinators page.

PLANTS Database
http://plants.usda.gov

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