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News Release

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Lone Star Wildflowers

A Guide to Texas Flowering Plants

\$29.95 paper

978-0-89672-644-4

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Texas Guidebook Offers Readers Rich Insights into Wildflowers

Each spring throughout the celebrated Hill Country and well beyond, locals and visitors revel in the color palettes and variety of the more than 5,000 species of Texas wildflowers.

Now LaShara J. Nieland and Willa F. Finley's *Lone Star Wildflowers: A Guide to Texas Flowering Plants* (Texas Tech University Press, 2009) offers easy identification through color grouping and provides a wealth of insights, from the origin of scientific and common names to growth cycles, uses, history, and native lore.

Nieland and Finley, Texas natives who have worked together on wildflower research and photography since their college days at Abilene Christian University, developed their easy-to-follow guidebook after years of experience in teaching secondary school science students (and their parents!) how to recognize and appreciate Texas wildflower species. They observed that flower enthusiasts could most easily identify flowers by color groupings.

"We have such a deep appreciation for the beauty, the science, and the heritage of the Texas wildflowers around us that we feel compelled to share that fascination with others through the photos and information in this book," said Finley.

Did you know . . .

Lone Star Wildflowers presents the science, history, and many common (and uncommon) uses and properties of Texas' abundant wildflowers. For example, ***did you know*** that **tumbleweeds** are edible? When young and tender, these plants actually make a tasty and nutritious cooked green vegetable. It is good to know what plants a person can safely eat, but a person also has to be aware of what is toxic. ***Did you know*** that as a rule, all **milkweeds** should be considered poisonous, but the narrow-leafed, whorled species such

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as *Asclepias engelmanniana*, contain glycosides that act on the nervous system and are considered to be the most dangerous? Ironically, some poisonous plants have been used as medicines when the appropriate dosage is utilized. **Did you know** that some **milkweed roots** were chewed by the Blackfoot people to treat sore throats and painful gums, while the Lakotas used the roots to treat diarrhea? And **did you know** that the *Lupinus havardii*, the **Big Bend Bluebonnet**, was believed by the Navajo people to be a cure for sterility and was thought to help a man produce female children? Also, **did you know** that ***Echinacea* (coneflower)** is being produced commercially as an immune system stimulant and that it has an estimated 10% share of the U.S. dietary supplement market?

Inside *Lone Star Wildflowers*

In the field, by the roadside, or in the classroom, *Lone Star Wildflowers* reveals the science, ecology, and rich lore of Texas flowers with these helpful features:

- Nearly 500 full-color flower photographs, grouped according to the color spectrum and further arranged by family
- An “Exploring Further” section in each color category, showing details of seedpods, leaves, buds, and fruits
- Current and historical uses of each species, including applications for landscaping, water conservation, traditional medicine, pharmaceuticals, and food
- Information about plant toxins and range management practices affecting livestock and wildlife
- Coverage of growth cycles throughout the seasons, depicting young plants, buds, mature seed heads, and fruits as well as flowers

LaShara J. Nieland, a native of Big Spring, Texas, taught honors biology in Abilene and Odessa, Texas, for twenty-seven years, sharing her love of nature with thousands of students. Now retired, she lives in Odessa with her husband, Andy. She continues to pursue her interest in wildflower photography.

Willa F. Finley, a native of Floydada, Texas, has worked in agriculture research and in agribusiness in the Middle East, North Africa, and Central Africa. Now residing in Lubbock, Texas, she is senior researcher in agricultural economics for LMC International in Oxford, UK, and participates in development projects in Africa. Her photography has received international recognition.

For more information on *Lone Star Wildflowers*, please visit the Texas Tech University Press website at www.ttup.ttu.edu or www.lonestarwildflowers.net/. Local vendors interested in ordering the book contact the TTUP at (800) 832-4042 or by fax at (806) 742-2979. Authors are available for lectures and signings. Contact them at willa.finley@lonestarwildflowers.net or lashara.nieland@lonestarwildflowers.net.