

The Green Thumb

July 2003

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The Green Thumb is a
publication of the
Arlington Organic Garden Club
www.aogc.org

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Dave & Cheryn Barnett
Angie & Doug Brown
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July Meeting – Sonny Hines from Wild Bird Center

Sonny Hines and his wife Gretchen are owners of Wild Bird Center of Ft. Worth at 4634B SW Loop 820 (Hulen St. south of I-20). They have been in business for the last four years.

Sonny started his interest in bird watching early, at the age of ten. He has been an organic gardener since 1980 and has studied courses at UTA to help further his birding knowledge and interest. Sonny and Gretchen had a table at our show in 2000, and have supported our club through donations of bird food and supplies.

Sonny and Gretchen hold bird walks during the cooler months (October) where you can go to different birding hot spots in the area and see birds in their natural habitat. On September 13, they will hold their first butterfly walk in our area. For more information, contact them at their store (817-737-4944).

Sonny will be speaking on Metroplex areas that are good for bird watching, and will talk about what to grow in your garden to attract butterflies and birds. The meeting will be held Thursday, July 24. Refreshments/social will begin at 7 pm, and the meeting will start at 7:30. Of course, don't miss the raffle: we've got LOTS of prizes.

NULGS 2003 a Smashing Success!



Natural Urban Living Garden Show Entrance. See the website (www.aogc.org) for more pictures!

This year's Natural Urban Living Garden Show was held on June 21, 2003. Our estimated attendance was 600 people, our largest yet! We are thrilled when people asked us who was our show coordinator, and when others asked who catered our hospitality room. Everybody is shocked to find out that everything about our show was coordinated and implemented by our board and OUR MEMBERS!!!

Once again, the show paid for itself, with enough left over to ensure growth for next year (and to cover the ever-increasing costs of renting the Community Center). The plant sale was amazing; Dave started out with 500-600 plants, sold every single one!

We didn't do it alone, however. We have so many people to thank! If you contributed to our show's success and we neglected to mention you here (or if you are aware of someone we have neglected to thank), please send us a note: we want to recognize you!

2003 Natural Urban Living Garden Show – Thank You!

The Board is thrilled that we have so many people to thank for their contributions to the show. . . we barely know where to begin!

Club Members and Other Individuals:

Thanks to all of our members and volunteers who brought food for the hospitality room. Thanks to Patty Royal (plant sale), Vicki Brady (membership table), Elaine Couch (membership table, slide projector), Diane Feldman (membership table), Beverly Elbert (membership table), Bob Barnett (Dave Barnett's brother – plant sale), Kim Lorenze (Cheryn Barnett's sister – plant sale, raffle), Alice Haas (food for hospitality), Bob and Donna Ressler (membership table, food), Nancy Hagedwood (membership table), Jennifer



Diane Feldman and Doug Brown watch a guest sign in at the membership table

Hensley (membership table), Dale Denton, Dan Anderson (plants for the sale, helped vendors & attendees carry stuff to and from their cars), Teresa Leo (children's room, babysitting plants for the sale), Marcia Perrin (kept watch over hospitality room all day!), Patsy Rosen (speaker), Gay Mitchell (membership table, hospitality room), Elaine Perry and Susan Horton from the River Legacy Living Science Center (children's room), Ann Halligan (children's room), Mindy Halligan (children's room), Kama Rogers (children's room), David Martin (Esther Chambliss' son – children's room), John Chambliss (mgr. of Luby's Ft. Worth donated cups & ice), Judy Griffin (let us pick herbs for the hospitality room), Hilda Heideman (help with hospitality room and children's room), Joanne Boudreaux (announcements about NULGS on her radio show), Maggie Ross McNeely (wonderful article in FWST that brought lots of plant-seekers to our show), Howard

Garrett (announced on his show and in his newsletter), Gailon Hardin (plants, use of truck to haul plants), Judith Edwards (provided plants for the sale), Marlene Hill (provided plants for the sale), Dave Barnett (growing plants for plant sale, running plant sale, main room chairperson, vendor contact, raffle donations), Cheryn Barnett (plant sale, putting up with all the plants in her back yard, keeping the books, raffle donations), Angie Brown (signs, banners, flyers, membership table), Doug Brown (flyers, membership table, helped vendors & attendees carry stuff to and from their cars), Esther Chambliss (hospitality room, children's room chairperson, raffle donations), Wayne Chambliss (helped vendors & attendees carry stuff to and from their cars), Penny Coder (children's room assistant chairperson), Susan Horn (non-profit room chairperson, speaker coordination, hospitality room, show publicity, growing & babysitting plants for sale), Robbie Pritchard (signage, hospitality setup, growing & babysitting plants for the sale), Joe Pritchard (signage, help with show setup), Teresa Saldana (non-profit room), Bob and Gregg from Community Center for working with us to get things coordinated and set up. Thanks also to the vendors' kids who helped in the children's room while their parents worked their vendor tables at the show: Andrew Svec, Brianna Jones, Autumn Jones, Shane Jones.



Elaine Couch setting out literature at the membership table



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"Hard to find but worth the effort!"

NULGS 2003 Thanks (cont.)

Donations from Vendors:

We sold a ton of raffle tickets, because we had such wonderful prizes (and so many of them!). Everyone had so much fun that vendors were bringing more donations up to the table even while we were in the middle of the raffles! While we tried to keep track of donations, please forgive us if we left anyone out (and please, drop us a line and we'll be sure to recognize you in next month's newsletter). We'd like to thank the following for their generous donations: Dewitt, Home Grown (magazines), Rodale (magazine subscriptions), Yuccado (catalogs), While on the Way (soaker hose), WBAP (Fossil Rim gift certificates, bags), Ball Publishing, Antique Rose Emporium (gift certificate), Cathedral Wind Chimes, Texas Gardener Magazine, EMC2 (book), Weatherly's Clock Works, Lady Bug Brand (fertilizer), Natural Resource Defense Council (tote bag), Beckett (pond), Maggie's



Dave Barnett selling plants


Organics (gloves & toddler shirt), Marion Owen of PlantTea (sent box of goodies all the way from Alaska!), Texas Discovery Gardens (travel mug), Keep it Simple (compost tea maker), Hulen Wild Bird Center (bird food for children's room crafts), City of Arlington (coloring books), Marshall Grain (ladybugs for children's room), Bonide (compost starter), Paradise Valley (soaps), Soap by Star (eye pillow), the Dust Jacket (botanical print), Tom & Donna Staples (Home and Garden Magazines), Keep it Simple Inc. (compost tea maker), John Snowden (native grasses for plant sale), All About Trees (mulch), Better Health

Market (for the use of their shopping carts). Special thanks to Gary DeMasters of Maestro-Gro (fertilizer), Jay Mertz of Rabbit Hill Farm (fertilizer, earthworms for children's room

creature feature – Jay was sick but came anyway and was even one of our speakers!), Lucy Harrell of Ladies of the Garden (rain barrel, trellis, and books), Ruth Kinler of Redenta's Garden (gift certificates for their nursery), Black Kow (hats, shirts, mushroom compost), and Advantage Compost (compost tea and mushroom compost)!

Other Organizations:

Speakers from Arlington Conservation Council, Dallas Area Historical Rose Society, Iris Society, Cowtown Gourd Patch, Rabbit Hill Farm. Thanks to Arlington Council of Garden Clubs (presented AOGC with a certificate congratulating us for another successful show). Thanks also to the men from Engine 6 of the Arlington Fire Department for stopping by and showing off the fire truck to the children!



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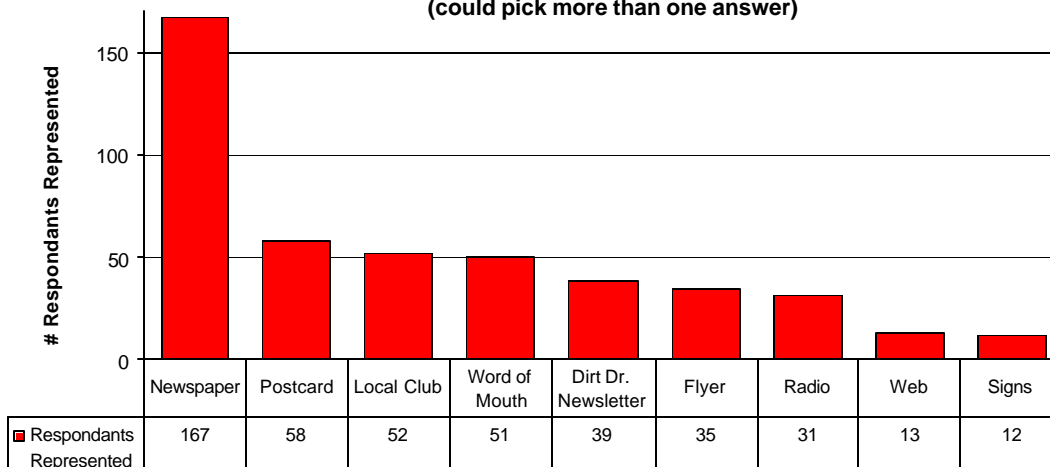
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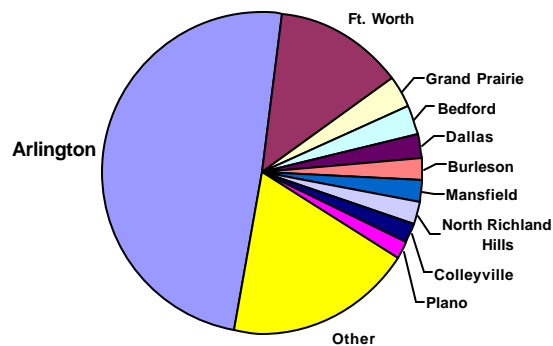
How Did Visitors Hear About Our Show?

More of our visitors learned about the show from the newspaper than from any of our other advertising efforts. We thank Maggie Ross McNeely for mentioning us in her article on heirloom plants: we had people lining up for the plant sale even before we opened!

How Attendees Heard About 2003 Show
412 total respondents
(could pick more than one answer)



Distribution of 2003 NULGS Visitors



Natural Urban Living Garden Show 2003 Attendees:

For the past several years, we have been asking visitors to our show to fill out a postcard so we know how they heard about us, and we can determine where our attendees come from. We save the postcards until the following year, print out show information and send the postcards back out.

Four hundred twelve of our approximately 600 visitors were represented by these postcards. About half of them (203) were Arlington residents. The next most highly represented city was Ft. Worth, with 53 respondents.

West Arlington residents were represented much more strongly than east Arlington residents (0.08% vs. 0.03%). This may be due to the lack of organic vendors in east Arlington. We had more attendees from 76016, 76010 and 76017 than from other Arlington zip codes. When viewed as a percentage of the population who live in the different zip codes, however, 76016 and 76015 were more highly represented than other zips. The strong showing in the 76016 zip code is not surprising: Redenta's Garden, Greens Produce, and Adams Feed are all in relative proximity to each other along Arkansas Lane, along the southern edge of that zip code.

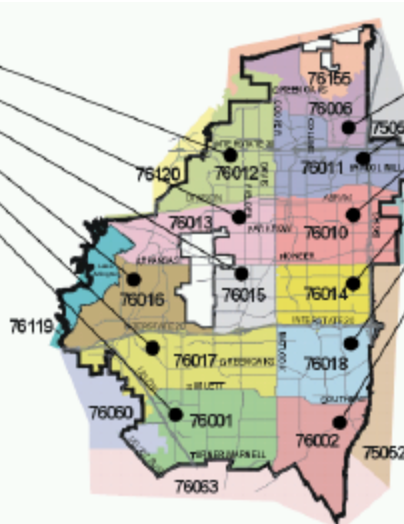
Arl. Zip	Population	Respondants	% of Population
76012	27,257	20	0.07%
76013	29,721	23	0.08%
76015	15,807	18	0.11%
76016	29,259	36	0.12%
76017	41,450	25	0.06%
76001	21,552	12	0.06%

West 165,046 134 0.08%

Arl. Zip	Population	Respondants	% of Population
76006	22,448	3	0.01%
76011	29,332	5	0.02%
76010	53,654	25	0.05%
76014	31,252	16	0.05%
76018	23,876	8	0.03%
76002	7,348	0	0.00%

East 167,910 57 0.03%

Total Arlington Population: 332,966
 Total Arlington Attendees Filling out Postcards: 191
 *some residents gave P.O. Box zip codes
 % Total Arlington Residents: 0.06%



Population data and map from Arlington city website: www.ci.arlington.tx.us

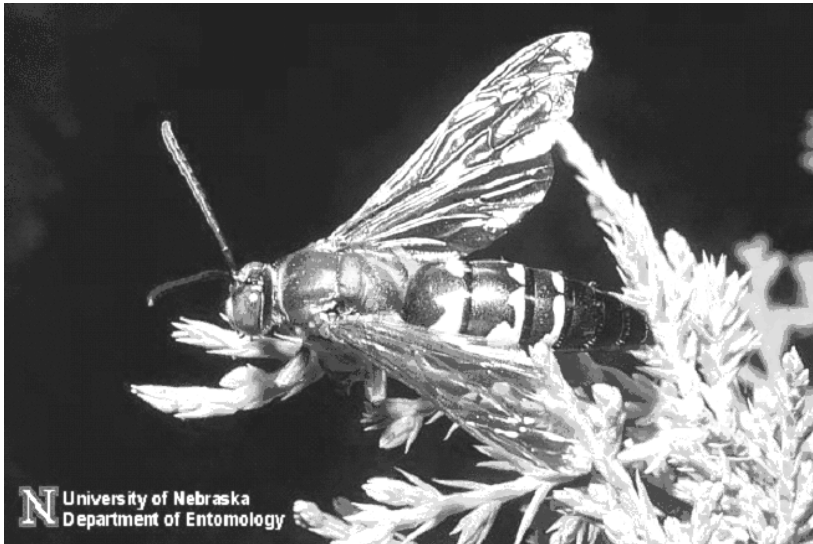
Creature Feature: Cicada Killer Wasp (*Sphecius speciosus*)

I have seen lots of wildlife through my back window. My husband and I refer to our deck as the “Brown’s bed & breakfast” because every season seems to bring new tenants. One spring it was home to four baby armadillos. Another spring two baby skunks called it home. Mice can often be seen peeking out from under the deck in the winter months. Each summer brings possums and raccoons traveling through or stopping for a rest. This summer’s resident is much, much smaller: a cicada killer wasp.



Cicada Killer Wasp

My cicada killer wasp is easy to spot: he is a very large wasp, about an inch-and-a-half long. Males are very aggressive, and will relentlessly defend their territory against other cicada killers while trying to attract a female mate. He first caught our attention when he repeatedly crashed into the sliding glass door for days trying to defend his territory from his reflection. Since then, we see him almost every day, flying back and forth over the deck and scaring off any competitors.



He looks menacing – with amber wings, head and thorax; and bright yellow-and-black striped abdominal segments that remind one of a giant yellow jacket. But the male cicada wasp is pretty harmless to humans – he doesn’t even have a stinger. I spent a couple of hours on “his” back deck last Sunday, washing windows and cleaning off lawn furniture. He held vigilant watch the entire time, and drove off several other cicada wasps, but he kept a respectable distance from me the entire time.

It’s the female of the species that earned the cicada killer wasp its name. Even though the females have stingers, they are hard to provoke and seldom sting people unless stepped on or grabbed. They use their stingers to immobilize cicadas, which they then drag back to the burrows that they have dug underground. They may provision each cell of their nest with up to three cicadas, and lay one egg per cell. The eggs hatch in two or three days, and the larvae feed on the live cicadas for several weeks, after which time they spin a cocoon, waiting to emerge the following summer.

Cicada killer burrows are often found in sandy soil in lawns, near trees, or in areas of sparse vegetation. The entrance to each burrow is surrounded with a u-shaped mound of fine soil that the female removed when she dug her burrow. The cicada killer wasp is a solitary wasp – each female digs her own nest and provides food for her own larvae – although sometimes nests from different females will be built in close proximity. Adult males and females eat nectar from flowering plants.

Cicada killer wasps are not a pest, and should be encouraged – or at least tolerated. Because they prefer areas of fairly sparse vegetation, keeping the lawn thick and healthy should help discourage them if you’re one of those people with a low tolerance for wasps. We do not know who their natural enemies are, but they may be birds, or animals that dig in the soil looking for grubs, so encouraging biodiversity should also ensure that they don’t get out of hand.

– Angie Brown

References:

<http://www.uky.edu/Agriculture/Entomology/entfacts/misc/ef004.htm>
<http://www.si.edu/resource/faq/nmnh/buginfo/cickillr%20wasp.htm>
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/lawn/note63/note63.html>
<http://insects.tamu.edu/images/insects/fieldguide/cimg331.html>

Texas Bug Book (Malcolm Beck and Howard Garrett)

Drawing:

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/2000/2078A.html>

Photograph:

<http://entomology.unl.edu/images/cicadkiller/cicadkiller.htm>

Ladies of the Garden ORGANIC

Consultation and Design

Patricia Cowan
(817) 443-3612

Lucy Harrell
(817) 572-0148

July is time for hummingbirds . . . don't forget to put out your feeders!

Next meeting. . .

Thursday, July 24, 2003

7:00 pm social, 7:30 pm meeting

Sonny Hines, Hulen Wild Bird Center

Birding in the Metroplex

Refreshments: Judith Edwards, Cynthia Chippendale, Theresa Leo



Club Information

Membership dues: \$20/year (individual or family) – membership year begins in April.

Join/renew at any meeting, or send check to return address above.

Meetings are last Thursday of the month (January – October)

- Doors open at 7 p.m. for refreshments, meeting begins at 7:30
- Open to the public unless meeting is designated “members only”
- Awesome raffle prizes are donated by Redenta’s Garden and by Rabbit Hill Farm!
- Meeting Location: The Garden Room, Bob Duncan Community Center, 2800 South Center Street (Vandergriff Park)

If you would like to serve on the AOGC board, please contact any of the current board members, or send email to board@aogc.org

Newsletter deadline: Third Thursday of each month

Please send newsletter submissions to Angie Brown, angie@aogc.org (include “Newsletter Submission” in the subject line, please), (817) 795-3300.

Want the newsletter but live too far away to go to meetings? Subscribe to the newsletter for \$10/year (to cover printing and postage). Send a note to us (see return address) along with payment and the newsletters will keep coming.

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

- John Muir, Naturalist -