



## Henderson County Master Gardeners Weekly News Article

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### Do You Want Native Plants in Your Garden?

By Yvonne Sparks

Of course you do! To help gardeners add native plants to their gardens, the Henderson County Master Gardeners (HCMG) will present *"The Natives Are Restless"* on March 31, 2016. This is the 16<sup>th</sup> annual HCMG Spring Conference, which will feature Dr. David Creech. He is the Director of the Stephen F. Austin State University Gardens and Pineywoods Native Plant Center located in Nacogdoches, TX.



There are 2,300 plants that call the pineywoods home. Currently, only four are listed as federally endangered, while at least 50 in East Texas deserve immediate conservation attention due to the small number of plants or colonies that exist. Dr. Creech will share his expertise about native plants in his presentation. He will explain what is a native and who determines that designation. In addition, Dr. Creech will share how to plant and use native plants in your garden. He will show photos of Southern natives - trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous perennials, ground covers and grasses - during his presentation. And Dr. Creech will discuss the problem of invasive plants in the ecosystem. Dr. Creech is bringing actual examples of native plants to show during his presentation.

The Spring Conference is one of two fundraisers sponsored by HCMG to fund the free programs offered throughout the year. These programs include Summer Series, Fall Intern Workshop, KAB booth and workshop presentations, Fall Festival at the East Texas Arboretum, Children's Garden at South Elementary and the Dream Garden located at the Arboretum. Each of these programs is offered free to the public.

A Silent Auction will take place during the conference to give participants an opportunity to bid on many items donated by businesses and individuals. The proceeds from the conference, Silent Auction and sponsorships provide the funding that allows HCMG to meet the goals of the organization to provide advanced training and continuing education to members and the public, assist the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, recruit potential Master Gardener candidates, and assist Master Gardener Interns in fulfilling their volunteer commitment for certification. To date, there are 39 certified Master Gardeners, 16 associate members and 12 interns in Henderson County.

It is not too late to purchase tickets for the conference. The conference will be at the First United Methodist Church of Athens beginning at 5:30 pm in the Activities Building. FUMC is located on 225 Lovers Lane at East College. Tickets are \$25 and include a plated meal by Traditions Restaurant of Tyler. Anyone interested in purchasing tickets may call the Texas AgriLife Extension Service Office at 903-675-6130.

For more information, call 903-675-6130, email [hendersonCMGA@gmail.com](mailto:hendersonCMGA@gmail.com) or visit [www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org](http://www.henderson-co-tx-mg.org)

