



TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Dennis Horn is Recipient of TNPS Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award and Botanical Hall of Fame



For many of us, when you mention the Tennessee Native Plant Society an image of just one person comes to mind, and that's Dennis Horn.

A charter member when the society was established in 1978. Dennis was instrumental in the early years of shaping what we now recognize as our society and what it does. Whether it was leading a field trip or sharing his knowledge of our native flora at a garden club meeting, Dennis quickly became

one of the go-to people in TNPS.

Hailing from southern Illinois, Dennis moved to Tullahoma to take a position at Arnold Engineering and Development Corporation. He enjoyed a distinguished career as an engineer there, culminating with being bestowed the honor of an AEDC Fellow in recognition of his

substantial and distinguished technical contributions to the nation's aerospace ground testing capabilities.

Dennis soon began to explore his adopted Tennessee landscape and became fascinated with the diversity of plants he encountered. Although not a trained botanist, Dennis used his engineering skills to plunge into a scientific study of our native plants. In short order, he became an almost encyclopedic store of botany knowledge, whether it was the scientific name for a species, the distinguishing characteristics for identification, or a location where it could be found.

When the state proposed to establish a rare plant list, Dennis was invited to participate on the Tennessee Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Council as part of the Rare Plant Protection Act of 1985. The Council is composed of 12 botanists from across the state which meets at least once every three years to review the list and propose listing new species or delisting those that are determined to have become more secure.

Dennis is probably known to most wildflower enthusiasts in the state as one of the authors of the Society's illustrated field guide, "Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley, and Southern Appalachians." Over a decade in the making, Dennis worked with the other authors on all aspects of the book from the text to the photographs to fundraising. As co-author David Duhl observed, "When Dennis and I worked together co-editing the Wildflowers of Tennessee book, I tried to be prepared, but that paled in comparison to Dennis. Dennis' notes were such that photographers, photos, and locations were all cross-referenced and dated. I was dumbfounded until I remembered that Dennis was an engineer! It was that attention to detail that led to the success of the book. I'll always remember those long days of working together and I'll always appreciate Dennis' commitment, dedication, and friendship."

After the book was published, Dennis didn't stop, but continued to promote it through speaking engagements with another co-author, Tavia Cathcart Brown. "It was an absolute joy to work with him on the wildflower field guide. We shared hundreds (if not thousands) of hours on the phone and in person, reviewing every measurement, photo, and detail that was included. Should a question arise, Dennis would investigate, even if it meant re-measuring a petal or researching a wildflower's status. An engineer by trade, his mastery of details and precision are evident on every page. He is unique in that his scientific mind is well balanced with an artistic eye. He truly appreciates the beauty of flowers, photography, and has a love of orchids in particular," stated Tavia.

She continued, "Above all, Dennis is kind, thoughtful, humble, and a very good person through and through. Over the five years during which we labored together to complete the almost 500-page guide, we encountered more than a few obstacles. I always knew I could turn to Dennis for a carefully considered response, smiles, a calm demeanor, wisdom and his steady presence. I am blessed to call him a friend."

Dennis has traveled far and wide, well beyond Tennessee, on botanical excursions, often times in search of his beloved orchids. Chuck Wilson relays one story of a trip to California. “I remember being on a botanical trip in California with Dennis and Bus Jones, and I remember how Bus was very ill and having a tough time of it. Dennis went well above and beyond at that time, taking care of Bus when Dennis would much rather have been exploring the magnificent habitats we were visiting in the limited time available. After that experience I recognized just how much of a selfless and genuinely decent person he can be when the situation calls for it.”

Although Dennis has traveled the country visiting spectacular botanical sites, there is one place that holds a special place in his heart, Short Springs. Not far from his home in Tullahoma, he worked tirelessly for years along with Marjorie Collier to have Short Springs designated as a State Natural Area. That work came to fruition in 1994 as the state granted it



Natural Area status. Soon after, he and Marjorie spearheaded the formation of the Friends of Short Springs, with which he continues to be heavily involved, leading hikes and giving lectures on the botanical richness of this wonderful spot. Last year, Dennis and Marjorie were honored with having the newly constructed bridge across Bobo Creek dedicated in their names for all their time and effort to preserve one of the most beautiful sites in Middle Tennessee.

And while we're talking about honors, Dennis was awarded the Governor's Stewardship Award for Natural Heritage Conservation in 2003. This award is one of the most prestigious given by the state to individuals and corporations who have made great and lasting impacts in the arena of sustainability, education, and conservation.

Dennis is truly deserving of our Lifetime Conservation Achievement Award and induction into the TNPS Botanical Hall of Fame as you can see. He has dedicated himself to sharing his love of Tennessee's botanical heritage and desire to preserve it for future generations. To those of us who have been lucky enough to spend hours in the field and in discussion with him, Dr. Edward Chester best sums up how we all feel about Dennis. As Dr. Chester recounts, “Only a few times in one's life will they know a person whose friendship is staunch and everlasting, even when they know about your failures, shortcomings, and dark hours. Such friends are doubly important when they are colleagues, eager to collaborate, but not afraid to quietly point out errors and suggest improvements. Dennis has been (and remains) just such a friend and colleague. He has always been ready and willing as we have sought to present and archive information gleaned from our concepts of the botanical world. Early on I realized, with his help, that our efforts, whether in the field or with pen or computer, were not for our self-glory, gratification, or to put our name on a page. Instead, our work had the primary purpose to share our often meager knowledge, accumulated over decades, with peers, and

perhaps more importantly, to make it easier for those who will follow these paths and expand, and correct if necessary, our efforts. Thank you, Dennis, you have been an important person on this earthly part of my journey.”

In conclusion, I would just like to add one more thing about Dennis. As much as he has dedicated himself to promote and celebrate the flora of Tennessee, that pales in comparison to the love and dedication he shows as a husband, father, and grandfather. I am inspired by you and am grateful to have you as a friend. Let’s all celebrate! To Dennis!

Message from the President

Hello everyone,

I guess you know that this is a very special issue dedicated to Dennis Horn. TNPS Board had planned on honoring Dennis at the Annual Meeting in April and then again at the Smokies Wildflower Pilgrimage. Due to the COVID virus these plans had to be changed. Dennis was presented with his awards by small group of us in a quiet pavilion at Old Stone Fort Park. This was not the celebration we had planned, but the awards are no less deserving.

Many of you know Dennis and have been on the trails with him. He has been a valued member of TNPS since its inception. He continues to serve on the Board, participate in the Field Trip planning, lead field trips, and be an Ambassador for TNPS throughout the state. As you know he was the driving force behind our book--Wildflowers of Tennessee and the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians- being published. I bet he doesn't even remember how many times he looked at each of the 700+ photographs.

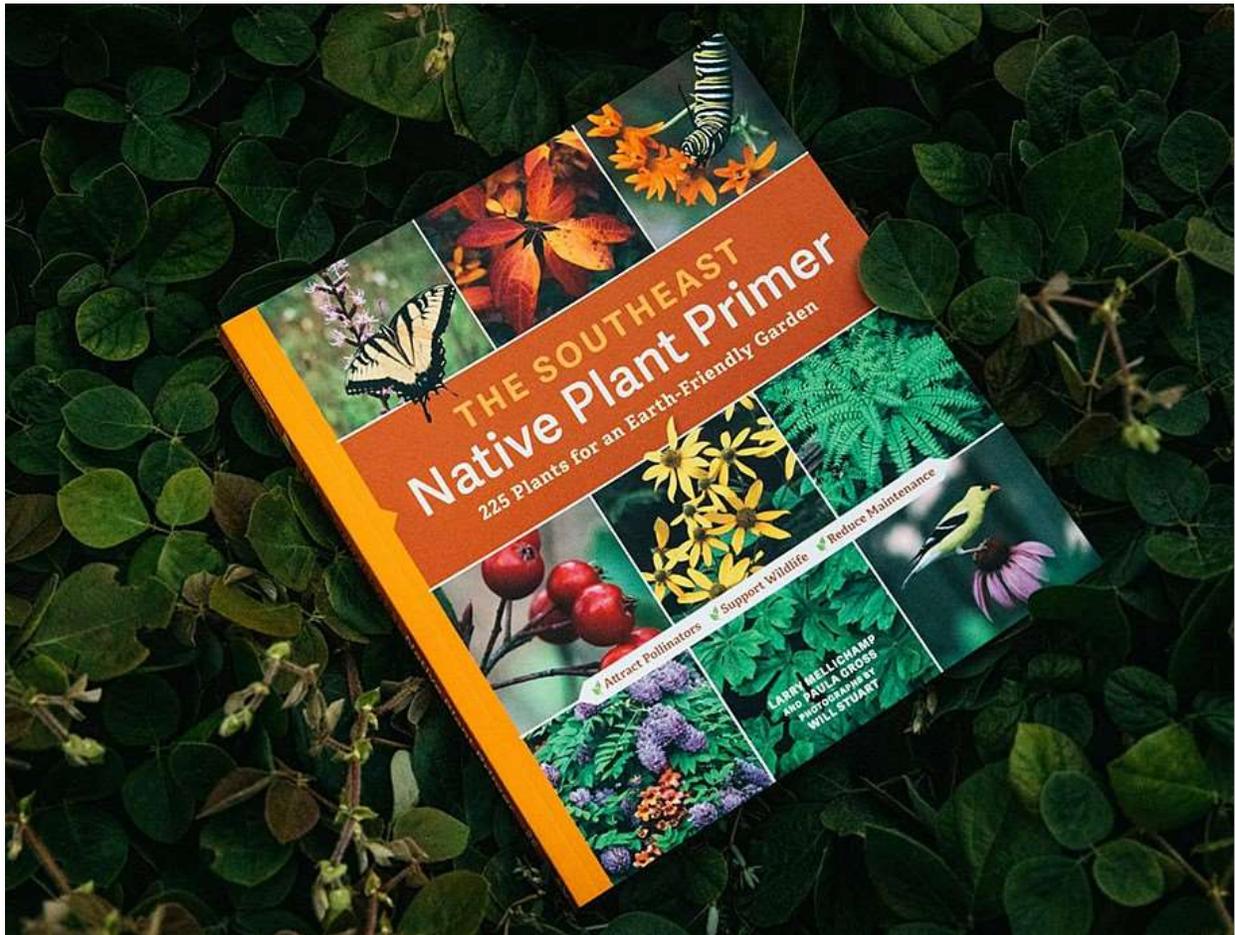
For Allen and me, he has been and continues to be one of our plant mentors. We joined TNPS over 30 years ago and Dennis has been there to help us learn the Flora of TN and still helps us. We have traveled the US and Canada with notes from Dennis on where to go to see certain special plants. We were in a natural area in California and ran into 2 folks from the Eastern US that knew Dennis and had our book!! Our travels would not been as rich without Dennis being gracious and lending us his knowledge and written notes on where to go and what to see.

Dennis, thank you for sharing your time and your knowledge. Thank you for your environmental efforts through the years to help maintain special areas. Thank you for your oversight and editing of our book. It wouldn't have gotten published without you. Thank you for helping to plan and lead TNPS field trips. Thank you for being a friend to TNPS and to me.

Susan

New Native Gardening Book

There's a new gardening book for us to enjoy! Written by Larry Mellichamp and Paula Cross, it's a look at 225 native plants that can be used to create Earth-friendly gardens.



Errata Corrections in Latest Edition of Wildflowers of Tennessee Field Guide

If you own the 2nd edition of our Wildflowers of Tennessee field guide, you might have noticed two publisher errors: the wrong photo for White Crownbeard / Frostweed (*Verbesina virginica*) and the not-quite-right color for Virginia Spiderwort (*Tradescantia virginiana*). Correct photos have now been posted at the link below. A new printing is in the works, with corrected pages. Meanwhile, the publisher has reduced the price of the current edition by 25%:

<https://lonepinebooks.com/product/wildflowers-of-tennessee-3/>

The Tennessee Native Plant Society is looking for a newsletter editor

The TNPS has been publishing newsletters since 1979! Typically published every quarter, the newsletter provides state conservationists, naturalists, and nature



enthusiasts with articles, photographs, and upcoming event schedules.

Our editor is moving out of state, so the position is now open. This is a great way to give back to the nature community and to volunteer for a great cause.

Volunteer job duties include:

- Coordinate with Board members for

articles / field trip summaries.

- Edit and format submitted information.
- Request final proofread from the Board by deadline.
- Send final pdf to TNPS Website editor for publication on webpage and to the Board for email distribution.
- Submit final pdf to publisher who then mails hardcopies to subscribers who prefer paper copies.

The current editor uses Adobe InDesign and will mentor the new editor as needed.

Contact TNPS if interested: info@TNPS.org.

Blooming Now!!!

August is one of those months where we seldom venture into the woods, so therefore, there are some plants that many of us may not be so familiar. One of those species is our most common native orchid, the Crane-fly Orchid (*Tipularia discolor*). You are probably familiar with the glossy green leaves with purple undersides that pepper



the forest floor and are quite conspicuous during winter when they are present. But a lot of people have never seen the flower in bloom because they bloom in August after the leaves have withered and just the flower stalk has emerged above ground. So if you notice a nice clump of these leaves this winter, mark the location and make a trip back in early August to view the charming flowers.