



Mid-South Plant News

Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center
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MSPMC Provides Career Training for Local Students



For the second year, the PMC partnered with Coffeetown High School's Jobs for Mississippi Graduates program. Above, Jermaine Phillips transplants native grasses for a study. We wish to thank Mrs. Mary Johnson, Job Specialist, Coffeetown High School for the opportunity to work with her in preparing these students for their future career goals.

2008 Wildflower Tour Draws Crowds to MSPMC



Both new and returning visitors of our annual wildflower tour recently gathered for the event on June 25.

Visitors had the opportunity to learn about a number of topics including pollinators, invasive plants, edible landscaping, and wildflower establishment.

The wildflower tour has always been a cooperative effort of the NRCS and several state agencies that have an interest in preserving Mississippi's native plant and wildlife species. It has become a significant annual event that allows a consolidated mission to be shared, while increasing the awareness of a variety of conservation issues to the public.

United States Department of Agriculture



www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/mspmc



Successful Commercial Seed Growers' Meeting Held at MSPMC

Approximately 30 participants representing Arkansas, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Mississippi attended the Commercial Seed Growers' Meeting on February 28, 2008.

This was the first meeting ever held at the Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center that specifically addressed the needs of commercial seed producers of conservation plants, and was organized in response to interest in a number of native warm-season grasses scheduled to be released by the Center over the next few years. The training focused primarily on the Center's mission and how it impacts the commercial seed growers within our service area. Topics of discussion included production information about the various conservation plants produced by our center, the importance of certifying seed crops, and the process of acquiring seed for commercial production.

Attendees also had the opportunity to tour the Center. Stops along the tour included some 'Alamo' switchgrass vegetative barrier studies, production fields of 'Highlander' eastern gamagrass and a field of 'Pangburn' switchgrass prior to prescribed burning.

A survey of participants in the Growers' Meeting provided some useful feedback: developing new releases of wildlife and forage plants was the #1 need followed by providing technical assistance in growing the releases. Providing more training and meetings was third in importance. Growers were split on carrying releases to cultivar status vs. releasing ecotypes.

The MSPMC plans to continue hosting a commercial growers' meeting about once every 3 years.



Participants enjoyed a lunch provided by the Yalobusha County Soil and Water Conservation District.



Group queuing up for tour of the Plant Materials Center.



More MSPMC Projects & News

Native Warm-Season Grass Training for Field Office Personnel Held at MSPMC

A training session highlighting warm-season native grasses was held on April 17, 2008. Approximately twenty-five Area 4 field office staff members were in attendance. Training topics included: basic identifying characteristics of switchgrass, little bluestem, big bluestem, and indiagrass; and the application and use of these NWSG's in wildlife and field borders and vegetative barriers.

Also, participants had the opportunity to take each of the four grasses back for ID block plantings at their field offices. This will give field office staff the ability to readily show these plants to interested landowners who may be unfamiliar with them.



Wildlife benefits: Observing the bare-ground structure in a 15-year-old field of 'Pangburn' switchgrass. The PMC is home to at least one covey of bobwhite quail.



Participants receiving instruction on native warm-season grass field identification.



Pots of native grasses for field office ID blocks.



Native Plant Spotlight



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Trumpet Honeysuckle *Lonicera sempervirens* L.

Trumpet (or coral) honeysuckle is a woody, perennial vine native to the eastern United States. This plant can be found in open woods, fencerows, or edges of cleared land. Often planted as an ornamental, this semi-evergreen vine is a must for gardeners that wish to attract hummingbirds to their yards. Not only are the showy flowers a nectar source for hummers and butterflies, but the fruits are relished by songbirds as well.

Trumpet honeysuckle performs well when allowed to grow on fences or trellises. It prefers full sun to light shade. Fortunately, it is not invasive like its weedy relative, the Japanese honeysuckle.

Active Releases

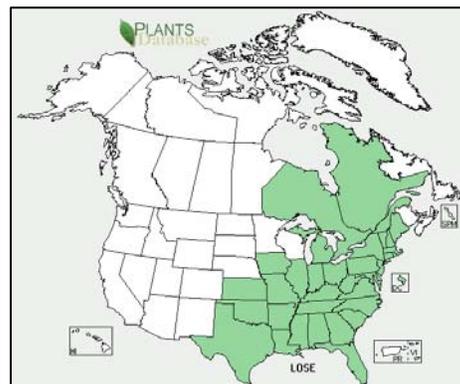
- 'Halifax' Maidencane
- 'Chiwapa' Japanese Millet
- 'Highlander' Eastern Gama Grass
- Hopefield Selection Trailing Wildbean
- Idian Bayou Source Powdery Thalia
- Lark Selection Partridge Pea
- Leaf River Source Wool Grass
- Leflore Source Creeping Burhead
- 'Meechee' Arrowleaf Clover
- 'Quail Haven' Reseeding Soybean
- Morton Germplasm Shrub Willow



Clarence A. Rechenhain @
USDA-NRCS PLANTS
Database



Robert H. Mohlenbrock. USDA SCS. 1991. *Southern wetland flora: Field office guide to plant species*. South National Technical Center, Fort Worth. Courtesy of [USDA NRCS Wetland Science Institute](http://www.usda-nrccs-wetland-science-institute.org).



<http://plants.usda.gov>

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