

Name that Plant!

By Erin Oleksiuk, District Technician, Coke County SWCD

The countryside is in full bloom! The recent rains and mild temperatures have made for a beautiful spring. New life has sprung up in pastures and roadways. Yellow, purple, and white flowers dotting the land are pleasing to the eye, but the plants also provide insight to the land and forage value for livestock and wildlife. Native plants will take root in a neighborhood or pasture, knowing the plants that grow around you is important.

Our native plants can provide excellent forage and habitat for livestock and wildlife. Some vegetation may not be edible by larger animals but provide seeds to birds. There are plants that are an excellent food source for deer, antelope, sheep, and goats but are ignored by cattle. Others are poisonous to livestock but palatable by deer at certain times of the year. Some plants seem so prickly and thorny that they must serve no purpose, but most vegetation will serve some animals in some way. For example, Tasajillo are spiny plants that no one wants to run across but birds will eat the small, red tunas and it can provide hiding cover for quail.

Knowing what is growing on your property is important for many reasons; aggressive vegetation will take over an area or poisonous plants being dangerous around pets and children. Maximilian sunflowers and whitebrush are both very aggressive. Even though the Maximilian boasts a pretty, yellow flower and the whitebrush is very fragrant, they can take over an area quickly. Locoweed, jimson weed, and floglove plants are poisonous to both humans and livestock and are readily found in our area.

Some natives prefer certain soil types, giving us clues to what else might be able to thrive in that area, aiding landowners in reseeded and planting.

Not only will plant identification give you greater insight to the plants around you but it is also a fun hobby to enjoy. Plant books are available for purchase at the Coke County Soil and Water Conservation District located at 214 E. 7th Street in Robert Lee. Free Poisonous Plants: Guide to Prevention and Treatment pamphlets are also available in the office.

Robert Lee City Council minutes posted

City council of Robert Lee met in regular session at 7:00 pm at the city hall. Meeting called to order and invocation was given by Councilman Johnson. The meeting was opened to open forum and no comments were made.

A. Consent Agenda:

Item 1: Approve bills to be paid.

Item 2: Approve Minutes of the Regular Session held on April 11, 2016.

Item 3: Approve monthly report



Beautiful Flowers! *The Indian Blanket (right photo) has red petals that are tipped in yellow, a common wildflower providing beauty along the highways. The Texas Skeleton plant (left photo) is an unusual wildflower since it is mostly leafless but blooms a pretty, lavender flower.*



Motion to approve Consent Agenda by Councilwoman Munoz, second by Councilwoman Rainwater. Motion passed.

B. Regular Agenda:

Item 4: Approve the Code Enforcement Officers Report. Motion to approve the report made by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Councilwoman Rainwater. Motion to approve passed.

Item 5: Approve Animal Control Officers Report. Motion to approve the report made by Councilwoman Munoz, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion passed.

Item 6: Consider/Approve nominee to fill vacancy on the Coke County Appraisal District Board. No action needed.

Item 7: Motion to approve ordinance #1261; Budget amendment line item increase TXWDB Debt Service. Increase due to Semiannual Paying Agent fee budget increase, \$813.10.

Motion made to approve Ordinance #1261, motion made

by Councilman Alexander, second by Councilwoman Munoz. Motion passed.

Item 8: Motion made to pay invoice for attorney fee, services rendered and amend the budget for legal service and increase budget by \$2,000. Motion made by Councilman Alexander and seconded by Councilwoman Rainwater. Motion passed.

9: Consider/approve a budget review of the second quarter fiscal year 2015/2016 budget. Motion to approve by Councilwoman Munoz, seconded by Councilman Johnson. Motion passed.

10: Discuss the current water supply and research for future water resources. The Texas Groundwater Surveyors crew was on the divide this morning to start the survey for water. Unfortunately, after getting moved in and set up their equipment malfunctioned. They will be sending their equipment off for repairs and will try again later. Engaged in a conversation with T.C.E.Q. Dam Safety office in Austin. They assured me that would not

come in and condemn the Mountain Creek Lake Dam, nor will they come in levying fines. As long as we continue with the yearly engineering inspection reports and continue the maintenance and up keep of the lake, they will have no problems with the city. The dam is rated in fair condition. This item is for information only, no action needed.

11: Consider/approve Intergovernmental Contract between City of Robert Lee and


Coke County. Motion made by Councilman Alexander and seconded by Councilwoman Rainwater. After discussion and changes the motion was made to table this item till the next council meeting. Motion made by Councilman Alexander and seconded by Councilwoman Rainwater. Motion to table passed.

12: Consider/approve increasing cash drawer for start

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