

## BASIC FACTS

### The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at a Glance

#### What's on site

- The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center of The University of Texas has 279 acres of gardens, meadows, and hiking trails and includes nearly 80 acres of research plots.
- The cultivated wildflower meadows and gardens comprise 12 acres with about 650 species of native Texas plants. The center is one of only three gardens nationally emphasizing native plants.
- Amenities include a [full-service café](#), the McDermott Learning Center, classrooms, a Visitors Gallery and a [store](#) that features art, apparel and books.
- Rotating [exhibits](#) of sculpture and visual arts are on display in the gardens and the McDermott Learning Center.
- Meeting, wedding and event spaces are available for [rental](#).

#### Why native plants matter

- Native landscapes and plants provide wildlife habitat, improve air and water quality, reduce storm water runoff and improve human health and well-being.
- Native plants that are iconic elements of landscapes in Texas and elsewhere are threatened by development, pollution, non-native plants that are invasive, and other factors.
- About one in five plant species in the United States is in danger of extinction. Texas, which has about one fourth of the plant biodiversity nationally, has 23 endangered and five threatened plant species.

[Read more details](#)

#### What we do

- Conduct [research](#) on native plant conservation and the benefits of wildflowers and other native plants in settings such as green roofs and highway roadsides.
- Provide design guidance as consultants on cost-effective native landscapes such as those at major corporations, the George W. Bush Presidential Center, and a mixed-use urban development.
- Connect children to nature through national and regional [educational initiatives](#).
- Raise awareness of native plants' beauty, and increase their use by providing in-depth [online information](#), including how to gardening articles.

## Who we are

- About 45 Wildflower Center staff and 480 volunteers welcome 100,000 visitors annually.
- Staff and volunteers maintain the gardens, conduct educational workshops, lead school tours and provide curriculum guidance, restore landscapes, [collect and bank seeds](#) for future generations, maintain the largest online database about native plants nationally, help develop national guidelines for sustainable landscapes and conduct research into ways native plants can provide even more environmental benefits.

Staff include:

- A member of the [advisory committee](#) for the National Invasive Species Council and chair of the nation's exotic pest plant council association
- An ecologist on the [technical advisory committee](#) for the William F. Clinton Climate Initiative
- A botanist working to [conserve Texas wild rice](#), the first plant listed under the Endangered Species Act.

[More details](#)

## Brief History

- 1982 - The late [Lady Bird Johnson](#) and the late [Helen Hayes](#) founded the National Wildflower Research Center and funded and supported it.
- 1995 - The center moved to its present location and was renamed the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.
- 2006 - The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center became an organized research and educational unit of The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2007 - Mrs. Johnson died on July 11, 2007, at age 94. She considered the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, founded on her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, as her 'legacy' project.

[More details](#)

## Lady Bird's Legacy/Our Mission

The Wildflower Center has continued Mrs. Johnson's mission to increase the sustainable use and conservation of native wildflowers, plants and landscapes. For example, the center has experts in landscape restoration that have designed environmentally sustainable landscapes for everything from the headquarters of a computer chip maker to the parks and educational gardens in a mixed-used, [urban development of 20,000](#). Our plant conservationists collect millions of seeds from Texas plants to bank for posterity through the [global Millennium Seed Bank project](#), and our education staff connects children with nature as national trainers for First Bloom, a National Park Foundation project of children establishing gardens in urban parks.