



STATE OF TEXAS  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Texas is a natural treasure, and the Lone Star State's botanical heritage has always been a point of pride. To this end, all fifty states in the Union have an official flower, but no such plant is as emblematic of its state's spirit as the bluebonnet. Indeed, the bluebonnet is to Texas as the shamrock is to Ireland. Native peoples, European explorers, and American pioneers have, for centuries, revered the bluebonnet, and consequently, the flower inspired a body of lore that resonates still to this day. Furthermore, the bluebonnet is one of more than 5,000 plant species native to our state. For instance, in semi-arid limestone soil blooms wild sage—which is, of course, “like perfume deep in the heart of Texas”; inland oats throughout the wind-swept plains evoke the “amber waves of grain” enshrined in “America the Beautiful”; cacti in West Texas epitomize the tough, resilient character of our people; and trees as old as Texas herself stand tall in the Pineywoods, providing shade and evoking awe well into the new millennium.

Beyond their cultural significance, Texas' native plants play a crucial role in our ecosystems. Due to the state's size and geography, our biodiversity is without equal, and we are blessed with an abundance of native trees, shrubs, flowers, vines, and grasses. The flora and fauna have evolved alongside each other for generations, and as a result, they have forged a harmonious natural balance and a delicate interdependence. To illustrate, the American beautyberry shrub provides a food source for the mockingbird—the state bird of Texas—which, in turn, scatters the seeds and enables the plant to proliferate. In this symbiotic relationship, the native plants are irreplaceable. These plants are uniquely adapted to Texas climates, having carved out a critical niche in their respective biomes, and they protect our air, soil, and water with an efficiency that no invasive species can match.

Texans take great pride in our rich botanical heritage—and rightly so. On cultural and ecological grounds, we must preserve the natural wonder of our state. Texas' landscape must be kept Texan, and to this end, botanists and ecologists throughout the state have long labored in common cause to protect our native plants and to ensure that they survive throughout the ages long. Moreover, recent research initiatives have garnered public support for sustainable gardening and landscaping practices such as xeriscaping. By cultivating native plants in homes, businesses, and public spaces, we can celebrate the beauty of our state and protect the natural order.

At this time, I encourage all Texans to learn more about native plants, to marvel at them in the wild, and to plant them wherever possible. Together, we can bring about a better, brighter, more beautiful future for our beloved state.

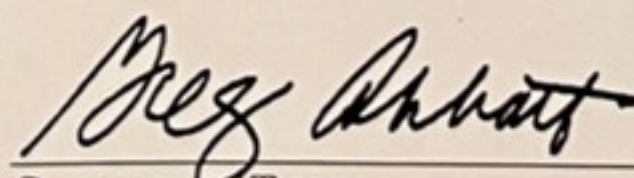
Therefore, I, Greg Abbott, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim April 2023 to be

## Texas Native Plant Month

and urge the appropriate recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof,  
I hereby affix my signature this the  
3rd day of February, 2023.



  
Governor of Texas