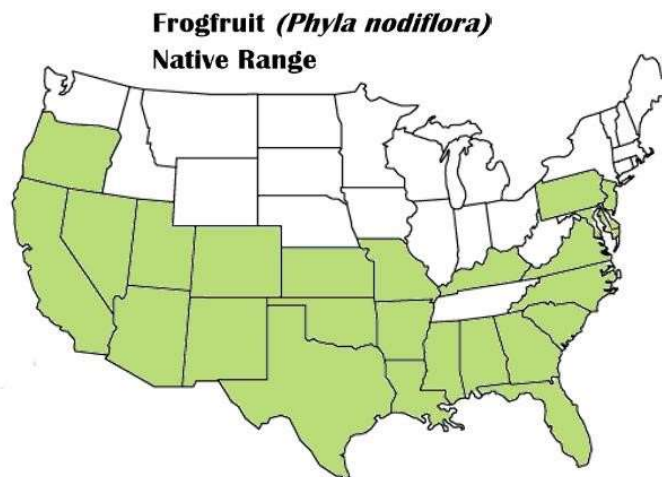


Frogfruit – Reprinted from Friends of Hagerman NWR Weekly Blog, September 28, 2017 (by Pat Crone)

It's been a good year for Frog Fruit. I've found it everywhere... growing along the edges of our country roads, on the lake shore trailing over sand dunes... and at Hagerman NWR in the Butterfly Garden on all four corners of the bridge. And when I come across it, I always have to pause to look for tiny butterflies flitting among the flowers—such a happy plant! Look for pots of Frog Fruit at the HNWR Butterfly Day Native Plant Sale on October 14.



Tiny Frog Fruit is a native butterfly host plant in the Verbenaceae family. It is a groundcover native to the southern half of the United States. A perennial in cool winters and an evergreen in warmer ones, it spreads horizontally by runners that will root into the soil where they lay on the ground. Frog fruit can be used as a groundcover in home gardens, although many consider it a weed when found growing in lawns. It works well between stepping stones or as a low creeping or trailing perennial; however, caution is needed as it may take over. The flowers are a mixture of purple, pink and white, and make a great nectar source for low-flying butterflies, shown below, bees, and other insects.



Also known as turkey tangle, frog fruit is very tough and extremely drought tolerant, but it also tolerates very wet soil. Creeping along the ground, it branches and forms dense mats several feet in diameter. The

plant rises only 3 to 5 inches above the ground but may have long runners. Frog Fruit is a host plant for the tiny Pearl Crescent (left, below) and Phaon Crescent (right, below) butterflies.



Sources:

ButterfliesandMoths.org

Butterfliesetc.com

Txsmartscape.com

Range Plants of North Central Texas by Ricky J. Linex

Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center (www.wildflower.org)

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