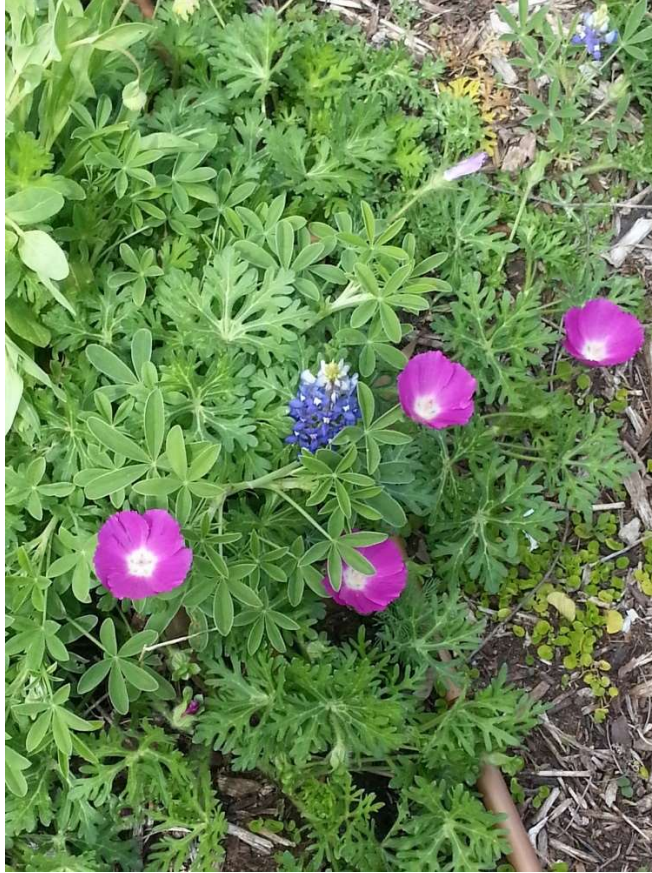


**Winecup (Purple Poppy Mallow)** – Reprinted from Friends of Hagerman NWR Weekly Blog March 9, 2017 (by Jean Flick)

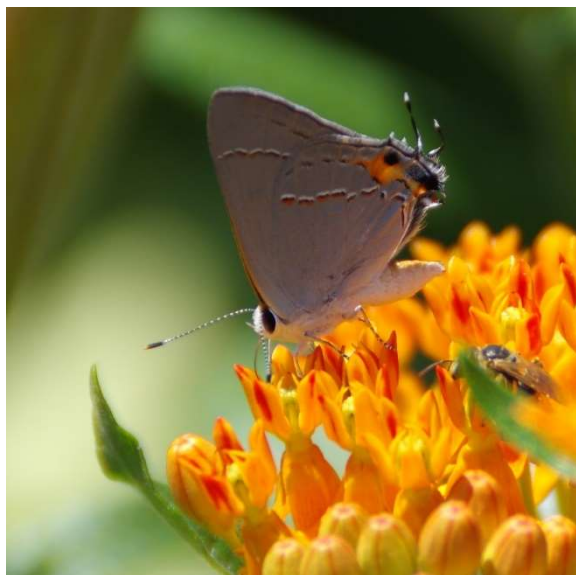
Winecups are a hardy, drought-tolerant perennial native to Texas and the central U.S. Callirhoe is a genus of flowering plants in the mallow family, Malvaceae. The family's nine species are commonly known as poppy mallows and all are native to the prairies and grasslands of North America. The Winecup, or purple poppy mallow, produces a chalice-shaped flower in beautiful shades of wine ranging predominantly from pink to dark purple. Look also for a white spot at the base of the five petals. The leaves are rounded, hairy and palmately lobed.



This spring-blooming plant sprawls vine-like across the ground, spreading numerous trailing stems up to three feet in length and forming a thick mat up to a foot tall. The blooms are found on the ends of slender stems and open each morning and close each evening. Once pollinated, the flowers remain permanently closed. Bloom time is typically from March - June. There are several plantings of Winecup in the Butterfly Garden at Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge. Keeping the faded or pollinated blooms picked helps prolong the growing season.



Winecups are easy to grow from seed, or can be started from a carrot-like tuber. After seeds are planted in the fall, flowers will bloom the second year. Plants prefer full sun in well-drained gravelly or sandy soils. They often go into dormancy in the summer, with new leaves emerging after rain.



Roots of the plant have been used to reduce aches and pains. The roots can be boiled, creating a tea, or can be dried, crushed, and then burned. Inhaling the smoke may relieve symptoms of head colds and aching muscles can be exposed to the smoke to reduce pain.

The beautiful blooms serve as a nectar source for pollinators, including bees and butterflies. The plants serve as a larval host for the Common Checkered Skipper and the Gray Hairstreak butterfly (shown below, nectaring on Butterfly Weed.). The female Gray Hairstreak lays individual eggs on the flowers. Young caterpillars feed on the flowers, while older caterpillars may munch on the leaves.

Sources:

Aggie Horticulture at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at <http://www.wildflower.org>

Wikipedia at [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)

Missouri Prairie Foundation at [www.grownative.org](http://www.grownative.org)

Butterflies and Moths of North America at [www.butterfliesandmoths.org](http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org)

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