



Identity and Style Guide

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Introduction

Benefits Of An Identity And Style Guide

Consistency & Repetition of Key Messages

The Georgia Native Plant Society (GNPS) was founded to promote the stewardship and conservation of Georgia's native plants and their habitats through education and with the involvement of individuals and organizations. To accomplish this mission, the society must become widely known among other involved organizations and leaders within the state and in adjacent states, as well as to the public at large. Research has shown that the most effective way to establish broad recognition for a brand or identity is through repetition of consistent "impressions." An impression is defined as each time the target audience hears certain words or sees specific images. Repetition that is not consistent will have a significantly poorer outcome in terms of recognition. The use of a style guide is a valuable tool; it helps all members of the organization communicate consistently.

Easy Dissemination of Mission, Goals, and Values

Organizations develop formal statements, describing their mission, purpose, values, goals/objectives, etc., to communicate clearly both internally and externally. It is therefore helpful to gather all such statements in one readily accessible place. This document should be available to any member of the GNPS with an interest or need to use it and to third parties who will communicate about the society.

Appearance of a Cohesive, Well-Run Organization

As members of the society communicate with third parties, the experience for our target audience can be one of documents that all came from the same organization or those that came from a variety of different organizations. If third parties see consistency in our statements, decisions, etc., it helps to create the impression of a cohesive, well-run organization. For example, our by-laws state, "the policies of the society shall not reflect any political partisanship". Therefore, when acting as a representative of the society, members should refrain from political statements of affiliations.

Quick Start for New Volunteers

As new volunteers are recruited to serve on committees, as committee chairpersons, and as officers and board members, these individuals need an efficient method to learn about their new responsibilities and the inner workings of the organization. This guide, in conjunction with other official documents, will be useful.

Methods

The initial version of the *GNPS Identity and Style Guide* was developed by members of the Image Task Force and approved by the GNPS Board of Directors. It will be maintained and distributed as necessary by the public relations committee, and updated as required. As with all official documents, a copy will also be held by the society's secretary.

Disciplinary Action

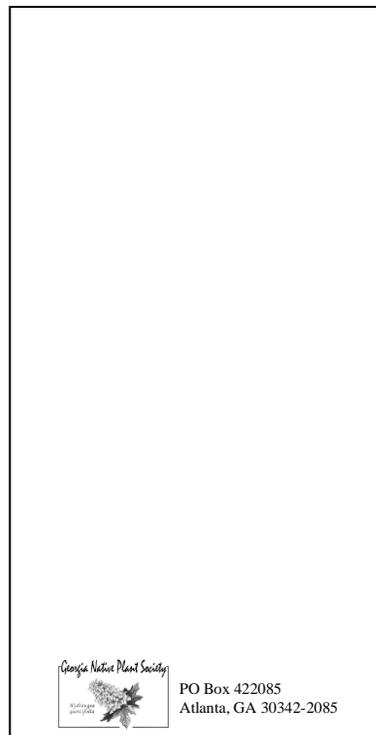
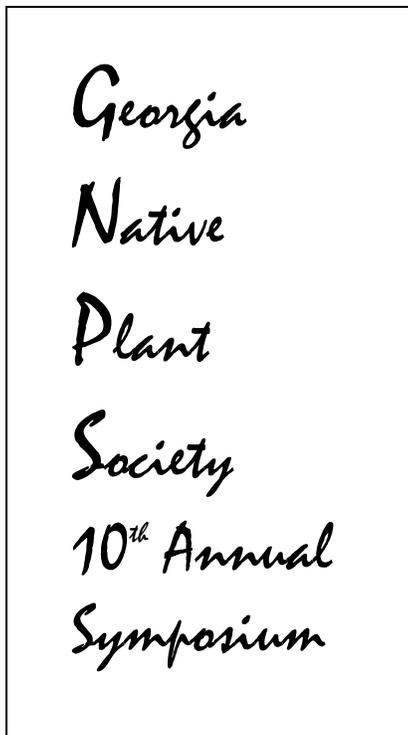
Though the content of this document is largely intended as a guideline rather than hard and fast rules, the society requires that each member behave in accordance with our by-laws, and not bring harm to the society by one's actions. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion for actions that damage the society.

Per the Georgia Native Plant Society By-Laws Section 4.3, "The Board may expel any member for actions inconsistent with the society's aims and objectives. The member shall be given at least 7 days notice of any proposed action by the Board to expel the member, with a statement of the reasons for the proposed expulsion, and may appear at the Board meeting at which the action is proposed to be taken, to explain his/her actions."

Logo

A logo for the society should be included on all published material (hardcopy and electronic) that will be viewed by the public. However, the logo need not be dominant. For example, on a tri-fold brochure, the formal logo might be included at the bottom of the back page along with contact information. The cover of the brochure might include the name of the society using the Mistral font in a stacked layout. This would not be considered a logo.

Example:



Logo History

A drawing of Oakleaf Hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, was first used as a logo on the society's newsletter, NativeSCAPE in January 1996 (Volume II, No. 1).

According to member Linda Fraser, she created the drawing to illustrate her article, *Georgia's Native Plants in Your Landscape*, published in *Georgia Journal*, April/May 1985. That article was later printed in NativeSCAPE in July 1996.

The drawing was selected as the logo for the society at the board of director's meeting in early 1996, and announced in an article in NativeSCAPE in April 1996.

In the intervening years, many variations of the logo have been used, including a standalone image of the oakleaf hydrangea blossom, and in combination with other text.

Components

Multiple versions of the GNPS logo have been approved for a variety of applications.

The logo consists of a graphic symbol represented by a drawing of a *Hydrangea quercifolia* blossom, a text component that is the botanical name produced with the Monotype Corsiva (*Monotype Corsiva*) TrueType font, and a text component represented by the organization name produced with the Mistral (*Mistral*) TrueType font. A sample of this logo (hereafter referred to as the Combined Logo) can be seen in Figure 1. In addition, to the combined logo, the name of the society may be used as seen in Figure 2 (hereafter referred to as the Name Logo), as can the acronym for the society. Please see Figure 3 for a sample of the Acronym Logo.



Figure 1 Combined Logo



Figure 2 Name Logo



Figure 3 Acronym Logo

One additional logo image is shown here. This line drawing was generated specifically for use on T-shirts and other merchandise where the fine detail of the original drawing was not desirable. This image should be reserved for these purposes only. Please see Figure 4.



Figure 4 Merchandise Logo

Color Specification

Logo Colors

Typically, the GNPS logo will be seen as above in black ink against either a white or a colored background. Please see the section about paper on page 10 in this document for information on recommended papers. In some instances, it may be desirable to generate the Name Logo or Acronym Logo in color. Files are available with these logos in the standard green used by the society. Please see samples below:



Complimentary Palette

A complimentary palette of colors has been defined for use with the above referenced green. This palette can be used as a guideline when generating promotional materials, presentations, etc.



Color Conversion Chart



On Screen:

Red, Green Blue – RGB – 96, 153, 101

Hue Saturation and Luminescence – HSL – 89, 58, 125

Process – Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black – CMYK – 63, 13, 72, 0

Web Safe – 669966 – RGB 102, 153, 102

Print:

Spot – when it is desirable to use the GNPS standard green color, request that the printer use a spot color that is as close as possible to Pantone Coated 625 C. Note that this color is very slightly more gray/blue than its equivalent RGB color when viewed on screen. The GNPS Dark Green (Pantone 560 C) from the compatible pallet might be a preferable choice.

Process – the closest Pantone match for process printing is DS-265-5.

The Pantone spot colors for the rest of the compatible pallet are as follows:

GNPS Logo Green – 625 C

Accent 1 – 146 C

Accent 2 – 131 C

Accent 3 – 5787 C

Accent 4 – 5773 C

Accent 5 – 428 C

Accent 6 White – N/A

Main Black – Black

GNPS Dark Green – 560 C

Additional help with color conversions can be obtained from the public relations chairperson.

Size and Placement

The image of *Hydrangea quercifolia* should always be positioned with the leaves to the right and the flower cluster pointing to the upper left. The botanical name should be included on the lower left. The GNPS name should be positioned above the image and centered.

The logo must stand alone and may not be combined with any other object, including, but not limited to, other logos, words, graphics, photos, slogans, numbers, design features, or symbols.

To present the logo properly, a minimum clearance between the logo and other elements must be maintained. For example, the amount of clear or "empty" space that surrounds the logo should be at least equal to ½ the height of the 1st G of the text (as in **G**eorgia or **G**NPS).

The standard size for the combined logo is a 1½ by 1 inch rectangle. For print applications, this logo should not be smaller than 1 by ¾ inches. Note that if this logo is reduced further, the botanical name will not be legible. The logo can be enlarged as much as necessary for the application.

For applications that require a smaller logo, it is recommended that the name or acronym logos be used. The standard size for the name logo is 3 inches wide, and it should never be smaller than 1½ inches wide. It may be printed as large as necessary for these applications.

The acronym logo should only be used in applications where a very small logo is required. For these applications, the logo width can be as small as ½ inch, or as wide as 1½ inches. For any application that can accommodate a larger logo, the acronym logo should not be used.

Misuse

The drawing of the *Hydrangea quercifolia* blossom with the botanical name tag (Figure 5) and without (Figure 6) has been used in the past on some of the society's materials. This image should not be used without both the society name and the botanical name in the future. The reason for this restriction is that the image, by itself, is insufficient to reinforce the GNPS brand. Use of the botanical name is a standard practice for such drawings, and is appropriate to an educational mission. Also, note that the bottom of the image in Figure 5 has been truncated from the original drawing. This image should not be used.



Figure 6



Figure 5

Should a situation arise in which these logo guidelines seem unworkable, guidance from the public relations committee should be sought. An exception will be granted with the approval of the public relations committee and the society president. Exceptions will be documented as addendums to this document, and the appropriate files will be added to the library.

Availability

Logo files are available in multiple formats. Contact either the secretary, or public relations chairperson to determine the best format for your application and to obtain the appropriate file for your project.

Fonts

Print

When possible, all the GNPS literature should be printed in fonts that are consistent with other standard GNPS printed material, such as the newsletter. The text type should Albertus Medium (Albertus Medium) TrueType font. The display type used for headings, etc. can be Albertus Medium or Mistral (*Mistral*) TrueType font. In some cases, for instance if neither of these fonts is available, Time New Roman (Times New Roman) TrueType font is acceptable. Times New Roman can also be used if a third font is required for the publication (for example as a caption font).

On Screen

The font family for use on screen has been defined by the website committee and is Trebuchet MS, Arial, Helvetica. For additional information, please contact the website committee

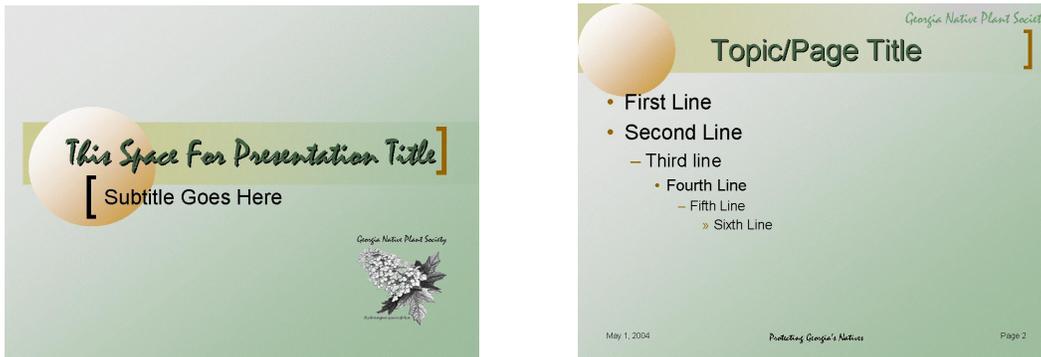
Templates & Stationery

Templates

Template files are available in standard Microsoft Office formats. Other formats may be made available as required. Unless stated differently below, contact the secretary, or public relations chairperson to determine the best format for your application and to obtain the appropriate file for your project.

Presentations

A PowerPoint presentation template has been developed for use by those preparing presentations to be given on behalf of the society. Speakers are under no obligation to use this template. It is provided as an optional tool only.



PR Communications

Standard templates have been developed for all types of public relations communications from the society. Templates include press release, meeting announcement, print-ready meeting announcement, and public service announcement.

Promotional Flyers & Mailers

A template for promotional flyers has been developed for use by those working to promote the society's events. Committee members are under no obligation to use this template. It is provided as an optional tool only.



A template for mailers is not available. However, examples of mailers that have been developed for past events including the plant sale, garden tour, etc., are available to serve as a guide in developing new mailers. Contact either the secretary, or the appropriate committee chairperson to determine what is available, and to obtain copies of files or hardcopy. In some cases, the actual file may not be available, or it may not be possible to read these files given compatibility issues with current software.

Website Pages

The GNPS website (located at www.gnps.org) is maintained by the website committee, and pages for addition to the site will be developed by the committee members. Those wishing to post information on the website should contact the committee chairperson for instructions on what information to provide and the desired format.

Brochures

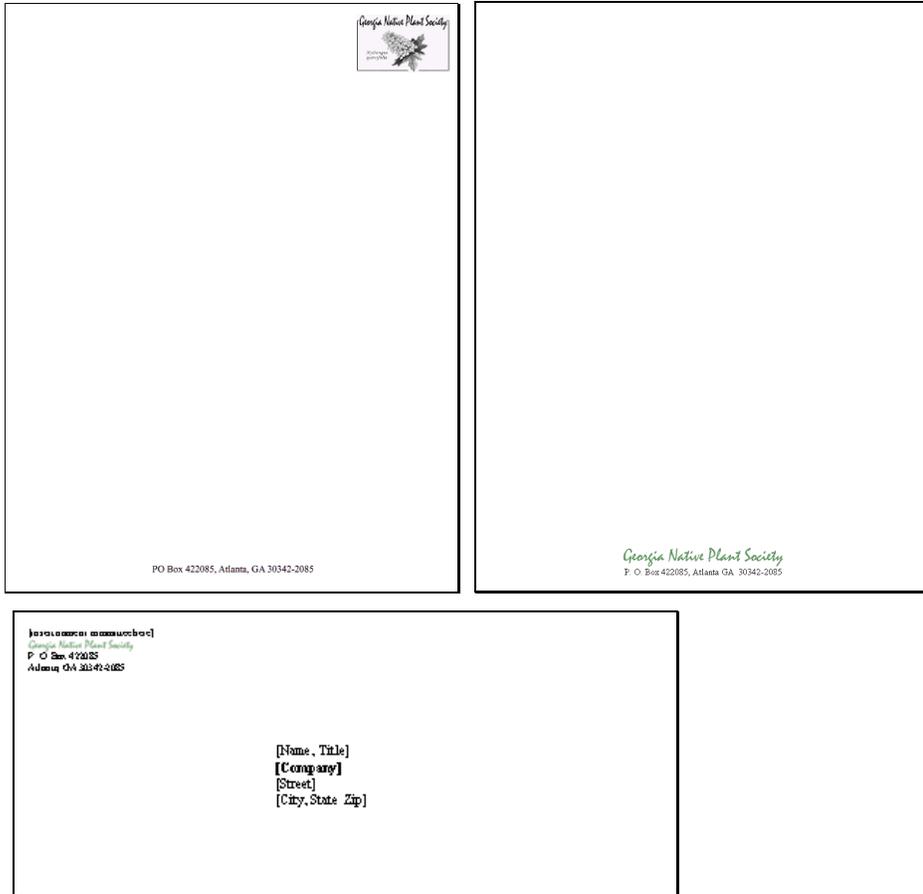
A template for brochures has not been developed at this time. However, examples of brochures that have been developed in the past for education, membership, and event promotion are available to serve as a guide in developing new literature. Contact either the secretary or the appropriate committee chairperson to determine what is available and to obtain copies of files or hardcopy. In some cases, the actual file may not be available, or it may not be possible to read these files given compatibility issues with current software.

Stationery

Stationery template files are available in standard Microsoft Office formats. Other formats may be made available as required. Unless stated differently below, contact the secretary or public relations chairperson to determine the best format for your application and to obtain the appropriate file for your project.

Letterhead & envelopes

Samples of the GNPS 1st and 2nd page letterhead and business envelope follow:



Note Cards

Preprinted note cards are available that are printed on a cream paper with the hydrangea logo on the front. These are intended for use as thank you notes. To obtain a supply of these note cards, please contact the newsletter editor.

Business Cards

For those who have a need for business cards, a template is available to generate them on a standard inkjet printer using business card stock available at most office supply stores. The template is designed for Avery #8376, which creates 10 business cards per sheet. Cards are sized 2" x 3 1/2". The ivory card stock is preferred. Large chain office supply retailers, such as Staples, offer generic ivory card stock that is also acceptable and will work with the GNPS template. If you require cards and do not have access to an appropriate printer, you may contact the public relations chairperson who can assist with printing a small quantity of cards. A sample of the business card is seen below.

Georgia Native Plant Society

<p><i>Georgia Native Plant Society</i> P. O. Box 422085, Atlanta, GA 30342-2085 Voice-mail: 770-343-8000 Web Site: www.gnps.org E-Mail: gnps@mindspring.com</p> <p>[Name, Title] [Home Street Address] [City, State Zip] [home telephone] [e-mail address]</p>
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Paper

The GNPS newsletter, NativeSCAPE, is a primary publication of the society. It is printed on Astroparche stock by Wausau Papers. The color is “Sand.” The weight of the newsletter stock is 60 lb. text. For consistency of the GNPS image, this same paper is often used for other applications, such as three-panel brochures, Plant of the Year promotional flyers, etc. This paper is tan in color and is most suitable for dark ink. It is not optimal for four-color process printing (i.e. printing of color photographs). Wausau makes a matching cover-weight stock, and it is frequently used for postcard mailings (such as the Plant Sale notices and membership renewal reminders).

The Astroparche stock is also available in a #10 envelope and in 8-1/2” x 11” standard reams of paper. This can be used for GNPS correspondence if desired. Another appropriate option for stationery or other printed applications is a standard ivory or cream stock with a smooth finish. Many such papers are available and commercial printers can assist with selection.

For four-color process printing, optimal reproduction will be obtained by using a white, coated stock. Commercial printers can assist with paper selection and should be consulted when GNPS literature is being produced.

File & Document Library

A document and file library is maintained by the secretary. The library should contain a hardcopy of all materials produced by the society, along with an electronic image of that document. Central storage allows for the easy sharing and re-use of materials among committees. Committee chairpersons have the responsibility to ensure that both hardcopy and electronic files are delivered to the secretary in a timely manner. A backup copy of all templates, graphic images, and promotional materials will also be maintained by the public relations committee. Anyone needing access to materials in the library should contact the secretary or the public relations chairperson.

Future consideration will be given to online access to forms and documents. The website committee has assumed responsibility to investigate, and if appropriate, develop and maintain this service.

Formal Statements

Mission Statement

The mission of the GNPS is to promote the stewardship and conservation of Georgia’s native plants and their habitats through education and with the involvement of individuals and organizations.

Non-affiliation

According to the by-laws of the society, “The policies of the society shall not reflect any political partisanship, or any preference, discrimination, or limitation based upon sex, race, or religious affiliation.”

It is important that each member of the society ensure their statements and actions do not suggest, in any way, endorsement by the GNPS for any political party or candidate, or for any other group that would violate the above statement.

Identity Statements

Standard identity statements have been developed for different applications. Following are approved statements to be used to describe the society.

Articles for Outside Publication

When an article is written on behalf of the GNPS for an outside publication, the author should credit the society and give a brief overview of the organization. This information can be contained in a statement at the end of the article, and it should include the GNPS address, phone number, and website address, as well as a description of the society's mission.

Be aware that the editor may have a standard format for such statements, or may not include what is provided. This should be discussed prior to submission of the article to ensure that credit can be given to the society and to clarify how the editor would prefer to accomplish this.

The following statement is one example.

Prepared by John Doe for the Georgia Native Plant Society. The Georgia Native Plant Society was founded in 1994 to educate its members and the public about native plants, including their propagation, culture, preservation in the wild, and use in the landscape. For information on membership and programs, contact: GNPS, PO Box 422085, Atlanta, GA 30342-2085; (770) 343-6000; www.gnps.org.

Grant Application

The following statements appear on the first page of the Research Grants Program Guidelines Application under "What is the Georgia Native Plant Society?"

The GNPS educates the public about the beauty, diversity, and environmental importance of the native flora of Georgia through lectures, symposia, workshops, field trips, sponsorship of research projects, publications, and educational courses.

We encourage the preservation and protection of naturally occurring plant communities on public and private land, relocate natives from areas threatened by destruction, and support restoration of native habitats. We encourage cultivation and propagation of native plants, promote native plants as desirable alternatives to exotic plants, and support the commercial availability of nursery-propagated native plant material.

The Georgia Native Plant Society offers financial grants for the purpose of supporting research on native plants. These grants are awarded to United States citizens attending Georgia Universities who are graduate students, qualified undergraduate students working on senior thesis projects with an advisor, or qualified professionals working in Georgia to support basic or applied research in botanical or horticultural areas that fulfill the mission and/or objectives of the Georgia Native Plant Society.

Press Release

About the Georgia Native Plant Society (GNPS)

The Georgia Native Plant Society was founded in 1994 as a nonprofit, charitable, and educational organization. Our goal is to know native plants and to make them known to others. GNPS activities are designed to promote the conservation of Georgia's native plants and habitats through education, research and the relocation of plants threatened with destruction. To grow a plant is to know it; therefore, we encourage the appropriate use of native plants in gardens and in the landscape. Additional information may be found at www.gnps.org.

Membership Literature

The Georgia Native Plant Society offers a quarterly newsletter, educational programs, lectures, symposia, field trips, and rescue events to educate its members and the general public. For more information, visit our website at www.gnps.org or call us at 770-343-6000.

Tag Lines

The GNPS currently does not use a tag line. A tag line is a phrase that is used for promotional purposes and is associated with the brand. It will typically follow a product logo or company name and defines the essence of that company or product

Examples include:

- Maxwell House – *Good to the Last Drop*
- Wal-Mart – *Always Low Prices. Always.*
- Dodge Truck – *Grab Life by the Horns*

Legal notices

Non-profit Status

The GNPS is operated as a not-for-profit organization. When requested, the following information from the by-laws should be provided.

“The society has been organized to operate exclusively for charitable and educational purposes as those terms are defined in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

Trademarks

At the current time, the GNPS is not the holder of any trademarks or service marks. It is the policy of the society to respect the marks of other organizations. When and where used, such marks will be appropriately identified as the asset of the appropriate organization.

Disclaimers

Website Sources for Native Plants – This list has been compiled to make it easier to find businesses that sell native plants. The listing of these suppliers does not imply any kind of endorsement by the GNPS of these particular businesses. It is important

that anyone purchasing from any of these suppliers understand that it is their own responsibility to ensure that they are getting a reliable and quality product or service.

Website Landscape Designers – This list has been compiled to make it easier to find landscaping services that incorporate native plants in their designs. The listing of these suppliers does not imply any kind of endorsement by the GNPS of these particular businesses. It is important that anyone purchasing from any of these suppliers understand that it is their own responsibility to ensure that they are getting a reliable and quality product or service.

Plant Rescue Program Documents

Currently, three legal documents are used in the rescue program. They are the Rescue Site Agreement, the Rescue Participant Agreement, and the Liability Waiver. These documents are included with the *Native Plant Rescue Facilitator Training Manual*, which can be obtained from the chairperson of the plant rescue committee or from the secretary of the society.

Approvals / Permissions

Representing The Society

General

As stated in the by-laws, the president is the official spokesperson for the society and may delegate that authority to one or more individuals. For the purposes of the newsletter, the editor is a designated spokesperson, as is the public relations chairperson for the purpose of communicating with the media. When these designated spokespersons publish articles or statements about a specific committee or board member, in order to ensure accuracy, the text will be reviewed and approved by the affected committee chairperson or board member. In addition, all press material will be reviewed and approved by the president.

Committee chairpersons and others will also represent the society to the public in the course of fulfilling their duties. In all such dealings it is important to be mindful of that relationship, and not behave in any way that would reflect poorly on the society, or suggest that, the society endorses the opinions, products, or services of the individual.

Promotional & Educational Materials

Promotional materials such as flyers, mailers, etc., will be developed by a variety of committees to advertise upcoming events. Such materials should be reviewed and approved first by the committee with ownership for the event and also by the president of the society. At the request of the committee chairperson or the president, the public relations chairperson will also review and offer input to such materials. Any item that will result in a substantial investment, such as membership brochures, etc., should be reviewed and approved by the board of directors prior to printing.

Published Writings

When a member of the society writes an article or book for publication, they may be identified as a member of the GNPS. However, if they do so, they must make it clear that opinions expressed in the document are not, in any way, endorsed by the society. If the writing is undertaken on behalf of the society, the author must have the article reviewed and approved by the president prior to publication. At the president's discretion, this review and approval authority may be delegated to others within the society.

Speaking Engagements

When members of the society speak to the public about native plants, they may identify themselves as members of the GNPS. However, they must also make it clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the society, and that opinions expressed in the presentation are not, in any way, endorsed by the society. Additionally, if the speaker is identified as a member of the society, the talk must provide clarity about native versus non-native plants.

If the speech is undertaken on behalf of the society, the speaker should inform the president of the schedule, topic, and content. The president may request to review and approve the content prior to the event. At the president's discretion, this review and approval authority may be delegated to others within the society.

Interviews with the Media

Requests for interviews from media representatives should be forwarded to the public relations chairperson. The chairperson will decide, in consultation with the president, who is best qualified to participate in the interview and coordinate the call or meeting. The public relations chairperson may also provide coaching on dealing with the media and with sensitive topics at the request of the individual or the president.

Third Party / Partner Communications

When a third party, such as another society, intends to publish a document that references the GNPS, then that document should be reviewed and approved by the public relations chairperson. This includes items such as press releases, promotional and education literature, etc. As necessary, the public relations chairperson will involve other committee members, board members, or officers to review and approval materials as well. GNPS members who are working with these third parties should take responsibility to ensure that this review takes place.

Word Use & Mechanics

Reference Style Guide

The *Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, published by the University of Chicago, July 2003, will serve as the GNPS reference style manual for any questions not addressed in this document.

An additional book that will be helpful to writers is *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E. B. White. Originally published in 1918, the full text of this classic is available online at

www.bartleby.com/141/. Readers will find useful tips to make their writing more interesting and readable.

Plant Reference Format & Nomenclature

All plant references should include botanical as well as common names. It is acceptable to use the botanical name for a plant without the common name, but not the reverse. Botanical names should be in *italics* (preferred) or underlined (if italics not possible). Do not use brackets. The first letter of the genus name is capitalized, and the species name is lowercased. After the first use, the genus name may be abbreviated to a single capital letter. Subspecies and variety names, when used, follow the specific name and are also italicized, with subsp., Var. and f. inserted before the subspecies, variety or form names (without italics). The abbreviations sp. and var. when used without a following name indicate unknown or unspecified. The abbreviation spp. is used to refer to unknown or unspecified multiple species. Plant hybrids are indicated by a multiplication sign (X not *) with a space on either side.

The name of a cultivar may be capitalized and placed in single quotes (for example *Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Alice'). Note that in this case, punctuation following the closing single quote goes after the quote mark, which is an exception to the usual rule for punctuation.

The GNPS follows the convention of not capitalizing common plant names. Keep in mind that other organizations do capitalize such names. Either way is correct, but the GNPS should strive for consistency in its usage. Sometimes, when the botanical name follows the common name, the botanical name is placed in parentheses. As noted above, the botanical name is italicized, but the parenthesis should be in regular face.

Examples:

Selected as the Alabama wildflower in 1999 and the GNPS Plant of the Year in 2000, the oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*, is another native for year round enjoyment. Unlike bigleaf hydrangea, *H. macrophylla*, these blossoms do not change color based on soil pH.

The milkweeds (*Asclepias* spp.) are excellent additions to the butterfly garden.

The ultimate authority on botanical names is the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature (ICBN). An electronic version of the original English text adopted by the Sixteenth International Botanical Congress, St Louis, Missouri, July-August 1999, can be found at <http://www.bgbm.fu-berlin.de/iapt/nomenclature/code/SaintLouis/0001ICSLContents.htm>. However, this text may be challenging for the casual user. A good authority that is relatively easy to access can be found at www.natureserve.org/explorer. These sources should be used to ensure the most current botanical names are used.

Spelling & Text Usage

Commonly Misused Words

affect/effect – *Affect* is a verb and a noun; so is *effect*. As a verb, *affect* means “to influence” (smoking affects your health) or to adopt a pose or manner (she affected ignorance). *Affect* as a noun is used in psychology and means “emotion.” *Effect* as a verb means “to accomplish; to bring about” (the prisoners effected an escape). *Effect* is also a noun that means “result” (The effect of her haircut was to make her look younger). The most common uses are *affect* as a verb and *effect* as a noun. If you *affect* (verb) something, the result is an *effect* (noun).

assure/ensure/insure – To *assure* means to make (often someone else) confident about something when the element of doubt is present. Both to *ensure* and to *insure* also mean to make certain of something. Though you will see overlap in usage, some authorities prefer the use of *assure* for people, *ensure* for things, and *insure* for money and insurance.

born/borne – Both are past participles of the verb *bear*, but they are used in slightly different ways. *Born* is limited to the idea of birth (He was born in May). *Borne* is used in the sense of supporting, carrying, or tolerating (an insult borne with dignity; airborne viruses), but it is also used to refer to giving birth in active constructions (She has borne three children) and in passive constructions followed by *by* (three children borne by her).

cannot/can not – *Cannot* is the preferred form except for the rare instance when a writer wishes to emphasize the *not*, for example, in juxtaposition to *can* statements: “You can run and you can hide, but you can not escape.”

complement/compliment – A *complement* is something that accompanies, strengthens, or enhances something else. A *compliment* is praise. (He received many compliments about the way his tie complemented his suit.)

comprise/compose – *Comprise* means “to contain or be made up of; to embrace; to include.” Careful writers will keep in mind the traditional dictum that “The whole *comprises* the parts; the parts *compose* the whole.” Substituting “is composed of” will avoid controversy. (Note that “comprised of” is a common expression, but it is wrong.)

endemic/indigenous – *Endemic* means “restricted or peculiar to a locality or region.” *Indigenous* means “having originated in and being produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment.”

farther/further – *Farther* indicates a physical distance. *Further* means “in addition to.” (He was an ambitious salesman and hoped to further his career by traveling farther to make sales calls.)

fewer/less – *Fewer* is used with plural nouns for things that can be counted one by one. *Less* modifies singular nouns denoting a quantity or a concept that does not have separately countable parts. (The manufacturing plant in Iowa has fewer employees and less production than the plant in Illinois.)

in/into/in to – Generally, *in* indicates a fixed position (she was in the house), while *into* indicates movement toward a fixed position (she went into the house). However, there are many exceptions (she put the money in her pocket). The two words should be written separately when their sense is separate (the Prime Minister took her in to dinner). Or compare these two examples: “He turned himself into an accomplished artist.” “The criminal turned himself in to the police.” Another way to describe it is to say that you write *in to* as two words when *in* is an adverb.

its/it's – *It's* is the contraction for “it is.” *Its* is a possessive pronoun.

native/naturalized – *Native* means “of indigenous origin or growth; not exotic or of foreign origin.” *Naturalized* means “having become established as though it were native.”

principal/principle – *Principal* is used as both a noun and an adjective. “The *principal* (head of a school) is the *principal* (main) authority in school-based administration.” *Principal* also refers to the sum of money (think of *capital*) on which interest is paid or received. A *principal* is also a leading performer or someone who hires an agent. *Principle* is always used as a noun, meaning rule, precept, or fundamental belief. (“A principle is a rule.”)

that/which – Both *that* and *which* are relative pronouns used to refer to places, animals, objects, ideas, and qualities. The use of these two words has changed over time. The discussion below covers their current use according to most authorities, though there is still some room for debate. Nevertheless, the guidelines below will help simplify the issue and should answer most questions of usage.

The word *which* is used to introduce a clause containing informative but nonessential (nonrestrictive) information. Commas are placed before the word *which* and at the end of the clause.

The word *that* is used to introduce a clause containing essential (restrictive) information and no commas are used. Not all sentences are easy to interpret; sometimes only the writer will understand the meaning well enough to know whether a clause is restrictive or nonrestrictive.

Another way to decide whether information is restrictive or nonrestrictive is to determine if the information in the clause applies to *all* things described in the clause. If the information *does* apply to all, the clause is *nonrestrictive* and is introduced by *which*. If the information *does not* apply to all, the clause is *restrictive* and is introduced by *that*. (*Incorrect*: Rules of grammar, which are purposeless, should not be followed. *Correct*: Rules of grammar that are purposeless should not be followed.)

Style Conventions

Spaces – In word processing, use only one space between sentences.

Numbers – Numbers can be dealt with in several ways. The GNPS newsletter follows these conventions: Use a numeral if it is a measurement. [4 inches, 10 feet, ½ inch in diameter] Hyphens are used in compound modifiers with numbers. [a 3-inch seed pod, a 20-mile hike] Spell out quantities zero through nine. [one tan seed, seven months]

From *the Chicago Manual of Style* – “In nontechnical contexts, the following are spelled out: whole numbers from one through one hundred, round numbers, and any number beginning a sentence. For other numbers, numerals are used.”

Many exceptions to these guidelines exist and a decision to spell out rather than use a numeral should be based upon readability, the size and precision of the number, and the context in which it appears.

Form of Address & Proper Names

The proper name of the organization is the Georgia Native Plant Society. In general, the full name should be used. Abbreviations are permissible in long documents, where the name will be used more than twice on a page. In these cases, after initial use of the full name, it may be referred to as either the GNPS or the society. Note the use of “the” before the abbreviation.

The GNPS prefers a “down” style – the parsimonious use of capitals. Proper names should be capitalized, but many words derived from or associated with proper names (board of directors), and the names of offices (chairman, president) may be lowercased.

The correct name for current board level, standing and ad hoc committees, subordinate programs, elected officers, and appointed positions, along with key events of the society follow:

conservation and restoration committee
education committee
finance and audit committee
garden tour committee
hospitality committee
membership committee
merchandise committee
native plant habitat certification committee
newsletter committee
plant of the year committee
plant rescue committee
plant sale committee
programs committee
public relations committee
southeastern flower show committee
symposium committee
volunteer coordinating committee
web site committee

field trips program
grant park program
grants and donations program
heritage trail program
plant clinics program

storza woods program

president

vice president

secretary

treasurer

historian

native plant sale

native plant symposium

Formal & informal; first use & second reference

Consideration should be given to the audience for any written document. When written for a large audience of mostly unknown readers, then a more formal style should be used. On the first use of an individual's name, the person would be identified by first and last name along with any appropriate titles. Additional references may use only the last name or the title. In formal writing, the name should not be shortened to use a first name only.

Example: *Dr. John Doe (or John Doe, PhD) will be the featured speaker. Dr. Doe is an avid native plant supporter.*

When writing for a small internal audience where Dr. John Doe is widely known, it would be appropriate for the second sentence to read, *Joe is an avid native plant supporter.*

Gender bias

The use of gender-neutral language is often difficult. For many it is unacceptable to use the generic masculine pronoun (he) in reference to no one in particular. On the other hand, the he/she gimmick or use of they as a singular pronoun can be equally irritating. When possible this dilemma should be avoided by recasting the sentence.

Example: rather than writing *some boy or girl left his lunchbox on the bus*, write *some child left a lunch box on the bus*.

The use of *It* eliminates gender in cases where gender is unimportant to the meaning of the sentence

Example: *the baby smiled at its mother* or *the bird is building its nest*.

An article can sometimes substitute for a pronoun.

Example: rather than writing *the patient developed a rash on his hands*, write *the patient developed a rash on the hands*.

Punctuation

The English language is always evolving, and the rules of usage are often in debate. The same can be said of punctuation. Though there are some hard and fast rules, there are also gray areas, and the authorities differ in opinion on occasion.

This brief document cannot provide thorough coverage of the subject. Instead, it only addresses some of the most misused or misunderstood areas of punctuation.

The Period

The period is often used behind initials that serve as abbreviations. However, in the case of the acronym for the Georgia Native Plant Society, the periods are omitted. [GNPS]

The Comma

Use a comma to separate words and phrases in a series. Some writers prefer not to use a serial comma to separate the last two items in a series; however, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition, which serves as the GNPS reference style manual, does recommend the use of the serial comma. [The GNPS holds meetings, symposia, plant rescues, and workshops.]

Do not use a comma when a conjunction connects all the words in the series. [John and Sue and Tom attended the meeting.]

Use a comma to set off words in apposition (equivalents). [The leader of the hike, John Doe, advised us to watch for poisonous plants, such as poison ivy or poison oak, and to be on guard for yellow jackets.] [Without appositives: The leader of the hike advised us to watch for poisonous plants and to be on guard for yellow jackets.]

Use a comma after introductory phrases or clauses. [For the newly planted trees to survive, they must be watered regularly.]

Use commas to set off nonrestrictive (nonessential) phrases. [We passed by a sourwood, blazing with red foliage, as we hiked the trail.]

Do not use commas to set off restrictive (essential) phrases. [All trees identified as sourwoods were documented in the survey.]

Use commas between parts of a compound sentence (a sentence with two or more independent clauses). [We had planned the project for years, and everyone was happy to see it come to fruition.]

Distinguish between a compound sentence and a simple sentence with a compound predicate (two or more verbs with the same subject). Do not use a comma between the verbs of a compound predicate. [We had planned the project for years and worked hard to see it to fruition.]

Semicolon

Use a semicolon between the clauses of a compound sentence when the conjunction is omitted. [The GNPS Plant of the Year program was initiated in 2000; the oakleaf hydrangea was the first plant to be honored.]

Use a semicolon to separate items that include commas. [Plants honored as GNPS Plant of the Year include oakleaf hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*; piedmont azalea, *Rhododendron canescens*; waxmyrtle, *Morella cerifera*; foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*; and sourwood, *Oxydendrum arboreum*.]

Use a semicolon to separate independent clauses that are linked by conjunction-like words (such as however, accordingly, consequently, hence, nonetheless, etc.). [The hill to the site was steep and covered with poison ivy; however, the plant rescuers were determined to press on.]

Use a semicolon to separate groups of words (whether phrases or clauses) dependent on a general term or statement that is followed by a colon. [He appreciated the many benefits of the organization: the educational meetings; the workshops; the field trips; and the opportunity for socializing.]

Quotation Marks

With the comma and period, place quotation marks outside. [She said, “I’ll see you later.” - “I’ll see you later,” she said.] Note an exception to this rule: Plant cultivar names are placed in single quotes. Surrounding punctuation is placed outside these quotation marks. [At its entrance, the botanical garden featured *Hydrangea quercifolia* ‘Alice’.]

With the semicolon and colon, quotation marks are placed inside.

Contact Information

How to Reach the GNPS

Telephone: (770) 343-6000
Website: www.gnps.org
Mailing address: Georgia Native Plant Society
P.O. Box 422085
Atlanta, GA 30342-2085
E-Mail: webmaster@gnps.org
gnps@mindspring.com

The membership committee handles mail received by the society. New and returned mail that does not reference an individual or committee will be opened to determine the owner, and it will be delivered at the next meeting.

Contact Updates

Each year, when new officers and board members are elected, the public relations chairperson will be responsible for notifying the media and other organizations and societies of these changes.

Privacy Policy

The GNPS is committed to protecting the privacy of its members and visitors to our website and events.

Members – Personal information, such as name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number, is collected from members. This information will be used to distribute newsletters and announcements of upcoming events, and it will not be sold or provided to other organizations for any purpose unless required by law. Individuals with access to this information should not disseminate it for any purpose outside of the society without the express permission of the board of directors, and should refrain from using the contact information for non-society business.

Public Relations Contacts – A database of public relations contacts is maintained by the public relations committee. Information will be used solely for the purpose of communicating news and information about the society, and it will not be sold or used for commercial purposes.

Gratis Newsletter Recipients – A database is maintained for societies, organizations, and individuals who receive a gratis copy of the newsletter. The information contained in this database will not be used for any other purpose.

Website – Members and visitors who post messages to the message board on the GNPS website must provide a name and e-mail address. This information is used to allow others to respond directly to messages and to track down individuals who may use the message board in an inappropriate manner. This information will not be provided to other organizations for any other purpose unless required by law.

List Server Use

The GNPS has access to a list server (commonly referred to as the listserv), which is hosted by the University of Georgia at Athens. The purpose of this service is to inform members about upcoming events (especially the plant rescue schedule). Other limited use is made to announce significant events of other organizations, send urgent messages, to request volunteers for various functions, etc. Messages will be combined whenever possible to avoid sending an excessive volume of e-mail to members.

It is the policy of the society to limit the use of the list server to messages that are serious and useful to the membership. It shall not be used to advertise products or services, or for any political or commercial purposes. This list server is used for one-way communication only - that is for the leadership team to make announcements to the membership. The bulletin board hosted on the GNPS website is the appropriate vehicle for threaded and interactive discussion.

The listserv is managed by the president and the plant rescue director. This responsibility may be delegated to others at the president's discretion. Those wishing to post an item on the listserv should contact either the president or the plant rescue director. These individuals will have the final decision on whether to post or not.