

PRESS RELEASE FOR LOICE KENDRICK-LACY

by Sarah Hudson Pierce



Loice Kendrick-Lacy is the founder and director of the Haynesville Celebration of Butterflies, with its 14th annual being held this year at the Claiborne Parish Fairgrounds in Haynesville, Louisiana. She is a member of the Louisiana Native Plant Society, Louisiana Ornithological Society, the Cajun Prairie Habitat Preservation Society, the Haynesville Garden Club, the Arkansas Audubon Society, and is a master gardener certified in both Louisiana and Arkansas.

Known as the Butterfly Queen, Loice Kendrick-Lacy a long-time resident of Haynesville will have an advance preview book signing for her first book, *Gardening to Attract Butterflies: The Beauty and the Beast*. Television interviews will be given and advance orders will be taken that day, but Loice's first book signing will be at the annual Butterfly Festival in Haynesville, Louisiana on Sept. 15, 2012.

Having been a journalism major at what was then Southwest Texas State Teachers College, Loice has published poetry and many articles on nature. For the past 37 years, she has written a column for the newsletter of the Arkansas Audubon Society, also serving as that publication's editor for 10 of those years.

An avid birder as well as butterflyer and lover of all things in nature, Loice taught either botany or ornithology for 14 years at the Arkansas Audubon Ecology Camp. For over 30 years, she has been giving programs on butterflies, birds, wildflowers and gardening. Since 2004, she has taught butterfly gardening to each new class of master gardeners in Southwest Arkansas. Prior to moving to Arkansas, she taught the same subject to master gardeners in Northwest Louisiana.

In reference to the Haynesville Celebration of Butterflies, botanist and butterflyer Dr. Charles Allen says, "This event has seen a lot of visitors over the years but none as important as the butterflies themselves. I am a fortunate person who has been able to attend the festival each year since its inception in 1999. As the director, Loice puts much work into the festival, making sure that every little detail is in place on that Saturday in September each year when butterflies are given their due celebration in Northwest Louisiana. This is the reason the festival has continued with such success for 13 years. Her book on gardening to attract butterflies is an appropriate crown for Loice, the Butterfly Queen."

Loice was born in Runnels County in the country near the small town of Talpa, Texas, in a setting idyllic for her to become Nature's Child. Since there were no school buses in the area when the time came, her three older siblings were homeschooled using textbooks supplied by the public school. Later when she was nearing school age, Loice says her mother tried with little success to interest her in books. Concerning her reluctance to open a book, Loice explains, "My interest at that time was in exploring the attractions of nature, thus I wanted to spend every daylight hour outside."

By the time Loice had reached school-age, the family had moved closer to a school where she was placed in the first grade, but the following year she was advanced to the third, skipping the second. She says, "I give the credit for any success I had in school to my mother for being such a gifted teacher even though she was often stymied in her efforts to interest me in scholarly pursuits in those early years."

In the first few years after Loice and her older siblings entered public school, the four rode Shetland ponies to school. As they had only three ponies, Loice rode behind her brother on what was the smallest of the ponies. She says her parents wouldn't intrust her to any but their only son nor did they think any but he could handle Bay Molly, a cantankerous and stubborn little animal.

Loice recalls some of her remembrances from her early childhood: a turtle laying its many eggs in a sandy spot in the yard; searching for the nests of wrens under the syrup buckets capped over fence posts; climbing the mulberry tree by the chicken house to feast on its juicy black fruit, unmindful of the resulting stains on her clothing; watching horned toads dining on their favorite insects in the red ant beds and wondering if they ever got stung as she often did; riding her stick horse (the dried stalk of a yucca plant) to search out new adventures; using a broom straw to bring forth a doodle bug from its inverted conical pit in the sand, all the time reciting "doodle bug, doodle bug your house is on fire;" looking for the sky-blue eggs of bluebirds in cavities of rotting fence posts; making necklaces from smilax leaves joined together with thorns from mesquites; picking the delicious agarita berries to enjoy with cream (**real cream** straight from the family dairy cows) and sugar; frolicking barefoot on the front lawn in a gentle rain.

Recalling the above pleasures of her childhood, Loice admits that truly not much has changed; she can still enjoy all those simple things of nature. Perhaps with one exception: the stick horse might better be used as a walking cane rather than a trusty steed.



Loice Kendrick-Lacy

