

Did you know the Twin Oaks Landfill has 150 acres of Deed Restricted Area dedicated to the endangered *Spiranthes parksii* plant?

*Spiranthes parksii*, better known as Navasota ladies' tresses, is an orchid species endemic to the State of Texas.

Navasota ladies' tresses are recognizable while in bloom from late October to December.

During this time, a team from [HDR](#), led by ecologist Ben Patterson, and a team from Texas A&M, led by [Professor William Rogers](#), conduct as much research on the species as possible.

Since its opening in 2011, the Twin Oaks Landfill has kept its Deed Restricted Areas in conversation status, so the flower populations have a place to safely reside. Patterson's main role has been to monitor the populations of the Navasota ladies' tresses and to make sure the land is still supporting the populations.

While Patterson is surveying, another group is gathering information.

Every year, BVSWMA, Inc. funds a research project for current graduate and undergraduate Texas A&M students.

"We're looking to manipulate variables like water, Nitrogen, light, above ground, below ground, herbivory. We've had fire experiments. We've had drought experiments. Modifying those variables is something that requires a team effort and having students participate in these activities has led to the training of young people who are now out in the world doing wonderful conservation and natural resource management activities in their profession. The training we have been able to provide them has paid dividends to Texas in a broader circle and arc than many would understand or appreciate," Professor William Rogers said.

Texas A&M student, Mollie Kemp, says she is excited to get some practical experience. "I've been studying plant interactions and the importance of preserving endangered species for the past

four years and this is a great opportunity for me to get my hands in the dirt and apply the things that I've learned. I didn't even know we had orchid species in Texas, so I'm excited to help with the collection of a flower that is close to home for me," Kemp said.

To read more about the Navasota ladies' tresses, click [here](#).