Native Plant Society of New Mexico

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

January/February 1994 Volume XIX Number 1

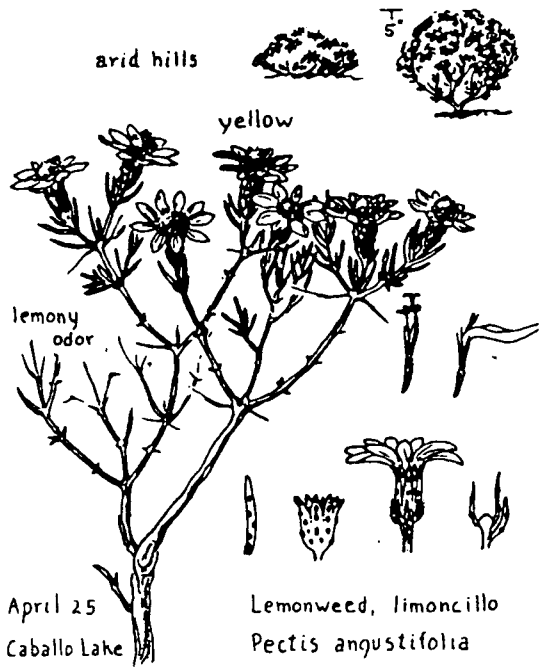
Pectis angustifolia:

A Pinch of Summer in the Dead of Winter

By Carol Brandt

When the cold breath of January chills me, I often look to my kitchen cupboard for memories of warmer days. On my shelf is a small bag of a dried herb that has a pungent lemony flavor, *Pectis angustifolia*. For me this herb has the fragrance of late summer, when the rabbitbrush and snakeweed burst into yellows and golds. *Pectis angustifolia* is also known as *lemoncillo*, named for its pungent citrus flavor. Called *hum'pasa* in Zuni, this herb is gathered in large quantities for winter stews and venison. In early December when the table is spread for the *Sha'la'ko* feast, a small bowl of *hum'pasa* mixed with salt can be found among steaming bowls of mutton stew, red chile soup, and Zuni oven bread. As visitors at the feast serve themselves, they take a pinch of the herb-salt mixture to flavor their food.

Hum'pasa is a diminutive annual plant in the Aster family (Asteraceae) that germinates during the late summer rains. By September this little plant, not more than three inches tall, has flowered and is ready for gathering. *Hum'pasa* is found typically among rabbitbrush in an open pinyon-juniper woodland in sandy soil. The whole plant is gathered and then carefully washed to remove sand from its leaves and flowers. It is used fresh, but more commonly it is dried for use in winter stews. Several of my Zuni co-workers also mentioned that they like to rub *hum'pasa* into venison prior to roasting.

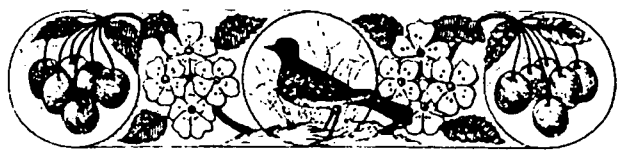


Even one thread-like leaf of *hum'pasa* can release a warm lemony aroma when crushed. Mathilda Stevenson, an ethnobotanist who visited Zuni in the early 1900s, noted that *hum'pasa* was used by young women as a perfume. The herb was crushed and then rubbed on the hands, face, and neck. Once while hiking along the mesas, I noticed the scent of this plant long before I saw it beneath my feet. On a cold winter day, a pinch of this plant in my squash soup is all I need to remind me that soon the days will lengthen, allowing the sun to warm the frozen ground.

Carol Brandt is an ethnobotanist working for the Pueblo of Zuni, Zuni Archaeology Program.

Inside...

HAPPY NEW YEAR



BOOK REVIEW

Drought-Tolerant Plants, Waterwise Gardening for Every Climate
A Horticulture Book, by Jane Taylor, Prentice Hall, N.Y. 1393

Drought-Tolerant Plants by Jane Taylor is a disappointment. The title page shows that the book was first published in England. In the introduction we learn that the author is English (she also lived in California, Pakistan, and other arid climates). This may explain why banana trees are listed. Drought-tolerant here, simply means the ability to withstand dry periods in what may otherwise be a normally wet climate. It is really somewhat of a mistake to speak of our Southwestern plants as drought-tolerant when they are really arid-adapted, i.e., used to living in a normally dry climate.

Many of these plants are not hardy in New Mexico (or are they?). The biggest problem is with the climate zones listed in the book. While going to the trouble of adapting the book to the climates of the United States by giving the U.S.D.A. Hardiness Zones for each plant, they are often incorrect. Perhaps the person(s) responsible for the listings simply tried to translate climate zones from England to the U.S.. Whatever the case, they have plants native to New Mexico, *Opuntia macrocentra* for example, listed as Zone 9 and above. New Mexico's hardiness zones only go up to Zone 8! Furthermore, *Qpuntia macrocentra* grows in Zone 7 (it's the most common prickly pear around Socorro) and is hardy to Zone 6. Mesquite, *Prosopis glandulosa*, is listed as Z10-11. Other plants that are regularly used in the Albuquerque area are also listed as Zones 8, 9, or above. These include: *Caesalpinia gillesii* (Z3-11), *Chilopsis linearis* (Z8-10), and *Delosperma nubigenum* (Z8-9). Another problem is the plant descriptions vary greatly in length.

Published under the auspices of *Horticulture* magazine, one would expect something more useful. Perhaps they succumbed to the allure of the English gardener once more, but they should have found someone on this side of "the pond" who is familiar with our vast geoqraphical and climatic differences. Or, this book could have been titled "Drought-tolerant plants for Southern California", about the only region of the U.S. for which this book is useful.
Ted Hodoba

The **Newsletter** is published six times per year by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The Society is composed of professional and amateur botanists and others with an interest in the flora of New Mexico.

Membership in the Native Plant Society of New Mexico is open to anyone supporting our goals. We are dedicated to promoting a greater appreciation of native plants and their environment, and to the preservation of endangered species.

Members benefit from chapter meetings, field trips, publications, plant and seed exchanges and a wide selection of books available at discount.

We encourage the use of suitable native plants in landscaping to preserve the state's unique character and as a water conservation measure.

We maintain a register of business and professional people who are members and can supply information and services related to native plants. To be added to this roster or to request information, contact the Membership Secretary.

Advertising Schedule
Approved advertisements will cost $40 per year.

Schedule of Membership Fees
Dues are $10.00 annually for individuals or families. "Friends of the Society" include organizations, businesses, and individuals, whose dues of $25.00 or more provide support for long range goals. To join us, send your dues to Membership Secretary, 443 Live Oak Loop NE, Albuquerque, NM 87122

Newsletter Contributions
Please direct all contributions for the newsletter to Tim McKimmie, editor.
Deadline for the next newsletter is Feb. 1.

Texas Sage or Ranger (*Leucophyllum* species)

by Dennis Swartzell
reprinted from Southwest Lawn & Landscape May, 1992

Leucophyllum species have been utilized within water efficient landscape designs for quite a few years. Prized for spectacular floral displays, vigorous growth, and relatively low maintenance requirements, these members of the *Scrophullariaceae* or snapdragon family are real eye catchers.

Leucophyllum frutescens or Cenizo is the species which first entered the scene as a drought tolerant landscape staple. *L. laevigatum* or Chihuahuan sage has also been available for many years. Other species include *L. candldum* and *L. minus* which have silvery foliage and *L. zygophyllum,* which is known as Blue Ranger because of its intense blue bloom. All are native to the Chihuahuan desert region which includes portions of West Texas, Western New Mexico and northern Mexico.

This genus has been utilized to produce several improved cultivars commonly available in the industry. Benny Simpson of the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station is responsible for the introductlon of numerous trade-marked selections. These include 'Silver Cloud' which has silvery foliage and deep purple flowers; 'Thundercloud' a smaller, stronger growing version of the previous introduction; 'Green Cloud' which as the name implies, has green foliage with lavender-pink flowers; 'White Cloud' which has silvery foliage and large white flowers; and 'Raincloud,' a hybrid of *L. frutescens* and *L. minus*. which produces masses of blue-violet flowers.

The newest of the cultivars to be introduced have been trade-marked by Ron Gass of Mountain States Nursery. The first is *L. langmaniae* 'Rio Bravo' which is indigenous to Mexico. The green foliage and lavender-blue flower of 'Rio Bravo' is similar to Green Cloud- but grows to a smaller height of about five feet.

L. pruinosum 'Sierra Bouquet' is the other introduction from Mexico whlch has silvery foliage attaining a size of six feet or more. The nearly indigo flowers are heavily perfumed and it is said that one plant will scent an entire garden.

Leucophyllums require full sun situations and good drainage to perform their best. They will tolerate alkaline conditions and do not need fertilization or much water once established. Plants tend to become leggy if planted in shade or if overwatered. Shearing may be utilized to produce more compact growth but less formal pruning practices will help to create a more natural appearance.

Texas rangers bloom profusely following rains or periods of high humidity and are sometimes referred to as barometer plants for this reason. Pests are virtually unheard of, with the possible exception of the mealy-bug. Problems with disease are also rare, particularly if care is taken not to over-water.

Many thanks to Robert Dewitt Ivey for permission to use his wonderful drawings from *Flowering Plants of New Mexico*, second edition, in our *Newsletter*.

WHAT'S NEW IN COLLEGE BOTANY?

By **Linda Curtis, Consultant Botanist**
reprinted from *The Harbinger* Winter 1993

Much has changed since I took botany in 1958 (gasp). I teach botany at the College of Lake County in Grays Lake, Illinois. Here are a few new ways that help to make the course more relevant.

The photocopier. The students photocopy freshly collected plants in addition to pressing them for a notebook collection. The requirement is for 20 aquatics, 20 wetland, and 20 prairie plants, with a separate notebook for each All must be labeled with family, scientific name, common name, location, and date. They collect (with permits I arrange) mostly on class field trips and then on the students' own excursions. The results are actual-sized plant images with veins and hairs in contrast. There will never be a field guide more valuable than the one you make yourself.

The computer. We are fortunate to have a MacIntosh computer lab at CLC. Even students who have never used a word processor before can master the basics in one session. All field trip reports are prepared on the computer with the file retained on the student disk I can simply red-pencil in any errors or omissions on the report and get zero-defect copy by the next lab penod.

Endangered species. What was commonplace is now rare. Thank goodness for our state and county preserves. With my slides, I can show the students what to look for before we go on the field trips. I also share my photocopies from herbarium collections to put in their notebook.

Environmental awareness. To save an endangered species, save its ecosystem. The students receive credit for reports based on current newspaper articles of botanic interest. In an area of rapid wetland destruction by development, there's plenty to be aware of (sigh). Since I am a steward for the Nature Conservancy, I encourage students to become participants in any of the worthwhile organizations in our area.

Target market. Used to be if you couldn't attend a once only daytime class, you were out of luck. This meant people with jobs or daytime commitments could never take a botany class. To make botany available to those people, I offered the course at night. You never heard of flashlight botany? Don't laugh We have one hour of light, then a gorgeous sunset, followed by flashlight identifications on our way out. Even in snowy blizzards, we can see the cones on the tallest conifers But next fall, I'll offer botany on Saturdays.

CALENDAR

OTERO

19 February. Tularosa Elementary School. 2 p.m. Three videos about the genetics of native plants.

LAS CRUCES

Next meeting in March.

ALBUQUERQUE

6 January. "Proposed Albuquerque Water Conservation Ordinance" by Jean Witherspoon. 7:30. Albuquerque Garden Center.

3 February. "Celebrate Wildflowers" by Theresa Prendusi of the U.S. Forest Service. 7:30 Albuquerque Garden Center. 10120 Lomas NE.

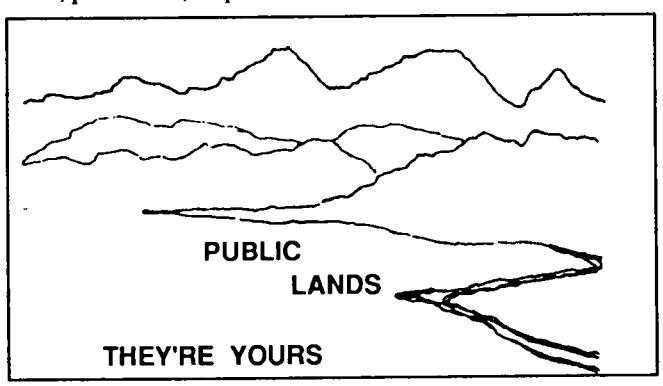
NPSNM BOARD

13 February. Board Meeting. Noon. Bosque del Apache NWR.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Las Cruces-Paul & Betty Shelford

The final field trip of the year took place on Oct. 16. Two Las Cruces members ventured into the Franklin Mountains and to the Wilderness Park museum. Not expecting much due to the lateness of the season, the findings were spectacular. Seen in bloom were Devils claw, boerhavia, Argemone, sand verbena, morning glory (2), paper flower, winterfat, snake cotton, pink sisymbrium, *Dalea formosa*, *Melampodium*, desert holly, *Gallardia*, melon loco, mariola, plains flax, *Stephanomeria*, and more!



Albuquerque - Lu Bennett

In October Tom Ellis of the City of Albuquerque Park Management spoke about Urban Forests. He believes the perfect tree for Albuquerque is Ash, but we are planting too many of them. Green Ash, Pine and Honeylocust predominate in Albuquerque. He advises bringing in White Ash and Oak to diversify. Honeylocusts do very well. Also, *Robinia Pseudoacacia* or Black Locust which has flowers that look like Wisteria flowers does very well. Bur Oak which is a White Oak that looks like a Gambel Oak is a good shade tree. Fruitless Mulberry grows well but is not recommended due to pollen. Maples are not happy in Albuquerque.

In November we viewed a video of the Albuquerque Biological Park. Groundbreaking for the park took place on July 25, 1993. The goal for the opening of the Botanic Garden is June, 1995 with a projection that all phases of the Biological Park will be completed by 1997.

Jean Heflin talked about her trip to Russia. She was with the first People-to-People horticultural tour of Russia and the Ukraine. The old Soviet Union has over 50 botanic gardens which received strong support from the govenlment. There are traditions that date back to Peter the Great that include collecting plants by people who would them send them to the gardens. Jean will give a full presentation of her trip next year.

"Weeds" cont'd from page 5

kind, which is of foreign origin, is new to or not widely prevalent in the United States, and can directly or indirectly injure crops, other useful plants, livestock, poultry or other interests of agriculture, including irrigation, navigation or the fish or wildlife resources of the United States, or the public health.

**~Species 5 and 6 have not been confirmed on the forest, but have been found on private land within the forest.

Why should I be concerned about noxious weeds? They are replacing native vegetation. Musk thistle and teasel are invading the habitat of our native Sacramento Mountain thistle, a species designated threatened. They reduce agricultural productivity, and thus can cause higher prices.

Who are the partners and cooperators in weed control? The Bureau of Indian Affairs-Mescalero, Soil Conservation Service, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service, BLM, US Forest Service, Lincoln National Forest, NM Department of Agriculture, Native Plant Society of New Mexico, Farmers and Ranchers and other interested individuals. Completion of the analysis is expected in March 1994.

WEEDS, EXOTICS, AND NOXIOUSNESS

By Paul Gordon and Joy Carter; excerpted from the *Mountain Monthly*, No. Sixty-seven Sept/Oct 1993

The word "exotic" means different things to different people. With plants, those that have been introduced into one area from another are generally referred to as exotic. Botanists often refer to them as adventive, meaning not definitely established or naturalized. These terms may apply to some specific area, or even to an entire continent. However, we have to be careful in this area when we discuss plants from adjoining regions of the United States and Mexico. Some of them may be native to our area.

Plants have been imported to our area and our country since before recorded history. Native Americans are known to have moved plants and seeds for their use, and the Europeans who came to settle the Americas brought with them favorite and useful plants, thus accelerating the introduction of exotics. This practice has resulted in some gross mistakes as well as some real blessings.

Consider the Siberian (Chinese) elm that is so extremely invasive here in the Southwest; it may be a boon to the Iowa farmer who lost all of his native American elm windbreak and woodlot trees to Dutch elm disease. Siberian elms grow rapidly and make a pretty good shade tree, although they do have problems such as being subject to elm beetle, root rot and other diseases. In the Southwest they are a most undesirable weed tree, taking over from native species. You can see an example of the very thick hedge this can form, to the exclusion of other plants, on the south side of Highway 82 above Mountain Park, just below Grandma's Attic. The tree appears to have at least one desirable characteristic, though. I (Paul) have a friend, Ralph Dunlap, who turns beautiful vases, goblets, and other art work from the wood, selling them at his shop in Lincoln. He shows them to me with pride and glee as he is well aware of my feelings for Siberian Elms.

Salt cedar (tamarisk) is another exotic that is a monumental pest in the Southwest (see *NPS Newsletter* 18:1). It produces a bountiful honey crop for beekeepers and is often considered quite ornamental, but it robs more water from our precious water tables than does any other plant. Forming impenetrable masses that gobble water, it invades and replaces native species in our bosques. It is presenting a major eradication problem in the western United States.

The annual weeds kochia (Coke' ee-uh) and smotherweed are similar plants that have invaded most western states. They have a protein content nearly equal to alfalfa as they are growing, but once they mature they lose forage value and the only nutrition is in the seed, which some birds and small rodents utilize. Another invasive pest, the Russian thistle (tumbleweed), was probably introduced accidentally. Lawn and garden preparation provides an opportunity for this exotic to start, since it will invade areas disturbed by almost any means. The plants aren't much problem when young, in fact they taste quite good cooked as greens, but they grow into huge weeds that dry out, break from the soil, and blow across the landscape, scattering seeds as they go. They can and do bury and flatten fences, and anyone who has cleaned them from a fence row knows what a stickery annoyance they can become.

Two recent additions to the list of exotics in our area are Russian knapweed and musk thistle. An old introduction is the thistle-like teasel, which is highly desired by many as a dried plant for decorating (unfortunately, since this practice can spread the seeds). It is known to have been brought to the United States by early colonial settlers to be used for "teasing" or carding wool.

All of these plants are increasing and expanding their ranges at alarming rates, and seem able to invade areas of native vegetation equally as easily as they invade denuded areas. They have had and will continue to have a significant economic impact on the Sacramento Mountains by decreasing the quality of forage for livestock and wildlife. When an infestation of teasel or musk thistle is really thick, grazing animals will not even enter the area, nor will people. It is not pleasant to try to walk through a thick stand of those large prickly plants. If you drive Highway 130 between Cloudcroft and Mayhill along the Rio Penasco, you will see areas that have been ruined by teasel and musk thistle. As with many introduced plants, these have no existing native means of control.

The invasive character of some of the exotic species may force us to learn about weed management as an important part of total forage management for livestock and wildlife. Chemicals may help temporarily, but in all probability we will find that we must learn more about stocking rates, seasons of use and interrelationships of all plants and animals occupying any given area. Until we learn how to better deal with them we will continue to suffer from their presence.

The US Forest Service is preparing to do an analysis of noxious weeds on the Lincoln National Forest, and we believe many people will be interested in the process and in knowing what is involved. Lee Poague, forest supervisor for the Lincoln, recently sent a letter to Friends of the Lincoln informing all recipients of the environmental analysis required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1976, and inviting participation. Integrated weed management is proposed for the Lincoln National Forest. A list of noxious weeds will be designated, control objectives established and treatment strategies analyzed. Treatments may include pulling and chopping, fire and reseeding, insects and pathogens, and use of herbicides approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. Integrated Weed Management involves a combination of methods, and each population of weeds must be evaluated for the best combination.

NOXIOUS WEEDS OF THE LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

Species 1-6 are native to Eurasia:

1. RUSSIAN KNAPWEED, or *Centaurea repens*
2. MUSK THISTLE, or *Carduus nutans*
3. CANADA THISTLE, or *Cirsium aruense*
4. BULL THISTLE, or *Circium vulgare*
5. LEAFY SPURGE**, or *Euphorbia esula*
6. OXEYE DAISY**, or *Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*

Species 7-11 are native to Europe:

7. TEASEL, or *Dipsacus syluestris*
8. DALMATION TOADFLAX, or *Linaria dalmatica*
9. HOUNDSTONGUE, or *Cynoglossum officinale*
10. BIACK HENBANE, or *Hyoscyamus niger*
11. POISON HEMLOCK, or *Conium maculatum*

"Noxious weed" (as defined by the Federal Noxious Weed Act of 1974) means any living stage (including but not limited to seeds and reproductive parts) of any parasitic or other plant of a

continued on page 4

Creosote Gains Popularity

by Joseph Pearl
excerpted from *Southwest Lawn and Garden* May, 1991

Being seen more and more in the neighborhood landscapes is the Creosote bush. Botanically known as *Larrea tridentata*, this medium-sized shrub is native to the southwest United States and Northern Mexico. Native Americans used parts of the plant for medicinal purposes, and the seeds were used similarly to the way capers are used today, as a seasoning.

Creosote bush (or simply Creosote) is gaining in popularity as a landscape plant. It will eventually grow to a height of 12 feet, with about an equal spread. This plant, once established in the landscape, will require very little water. But remember what when planting this desert dweller, to water regularly until new growth appears. Once the plant gets established in the landscape, little additional watering will be needed. Pruning is another maintenance task that is virtually unnecessary with Creosote. It looks best when left to grow in its natural form. The only maintenance that may be needed is to rake the dropped foliage from beneath the shrub. Although this debris will act as a natural mulch, it can build up and become unsightly. However, this mulch will retain moisture for the plant and add organic matter to the soil around the plant. It is strictly a judgement call to determine how much build-up is appropriate to the landscape theme in which the creosote is planted. One major factor to consider when planting Creosote is an allelopathic substance that works like a growth inhibitor, thought to be derived from the root system. This is possibly a mechanism that prevents other plants from obtaining much-needed water from around the creosote. In the desert, one will notice that no plants grow beneath the Creosote's dripline.

The flowers of Creosote are small, yellow solitary blooms that are followed by fuzzy grey seed pods. When in full bloom, the plant is covered with these tiny yellow blossoms, yet it is not a massive bloom like some of the Cassia species. The contrast between the yellow flower and the dark green foliage is quite attractive. The plant has an open, airy growth habit, with a graceful look when the wind blows through it. When used in the landscape, it should be considered an accent plant. After a rain, the plant gives off a fragrant scent that is very pleasing but not overpowering.

The plant is a place for the desert wildlife to escape from the intensive sun. Jackrabbits can often be seen sitting under the canopy of the creosote. One must be careful around the shrubs, for rattlesnakes also like to avoid the sun and sometimes can be found resting underneath It.

Transplanting Creosote from the desert usually results in a high loss ratio. Care must be taken when attempting to remove seedlings from under the host plant, because damage can occur to the root system of the plant. To avoid such damage, it is recommended to locate seedlings that are growing in more open areas. There will be more room to remove a larger root mass, thus decreasing transplant shock and increasing chances for success. The most ecologically sound way to obtain the plants is through a nursery. The availability of creosote at plant nurseries is increasing with the gaining popularity of the plant. One and five gallon plants can now be found at many nurseries in the Southwest.

Pathogens and pests that affect these desert residents are few. Occasional galls may appear an the branches and stems, but pruning off affected areas with a sterile pair of pruning shears will keep this in check No major insects tend to bother creosote. Perhaps this is due to the taste of the sap, which do not appeal to insects with piercing/ sucking mouth parts, or the allelopathic substance within the plant's chemistry.

The next time while strolling in the desert, crinkle up some creosote leaves and relish the scent. Especially after a rainstrom, its aroma pervades the desert. Enjoy.

LAND OF HONEY

By Roger Peterson

Plant gums come out soft and tacky but they dry hard and brittle. Unlike resins they are soluble in water but not in alcohol. Cherry, peach, and plum are big gum producers. Gum arabic comes from the African *Acacia senegal*. Chicle—chewing gum—comes from *Manilikara zapōtilla* (Sapotaceae), a tropical tree not tapped until age 70. Also chewable is the gum of our one sapotaceous plant, *Bumelia lanuginosa*; but only half a dozen ranch families in southern Hidalgo County have the pleasure of its company. Less obnoxious uses of gums include mucilage, bases for medicinal mixes, ink, stationery, and matches.

New Mexico's—indeed, the nation's—main gum trees are honey mesquite, on our eastern plains from Union to Torrance and Eddy Counties, and western honey mesquite, from Sierra and Otero Counties southwestward. Gum exudes from branches and trunks in worm-shaped or irregular squidges. Forbes in 1895 (Arizona Agr. Expt. Stn. Bul. 13) reported that at that time 1200 pounds per year were being harvested in Texas alone.

Dried mesquite gum yields 50% arabinose and 25% galactose (both are sugars) and lesser amounts of monomethylglucuronic acid, protein, and ash, mostly calcium. In life these components plus water occur together in large complex polysaccharide molecules.

C. Greenwood and P. Morey of Texas Tech University have looked at the physiology and anatomy of "Gummosis in honey mesquite," *Botanical Gazette* 140: 32-38. They find that the colorless to amber mesquite gums come from the phloem (bark), whereas darker brown gum comes from the wood. In their quest for industrial arabinose they get some increase in production by applying Ethephon or 2,4,5-T. Beating, rock pelting, abrading, filing, skinning, and acid burning also induce gum cavities in wood, apparently by wounding the cambium. (The phloem shrugs off such sadism.)

Once mesquite pods were a mainstay of native Southwesterners' larders. Now ranchers and taxpayers shell out many thousands of dollars per year to kill mesquite which competes with grass. Could gum production, high wildlife values, and other uses gain new respect for this "weed"?

THOSE MESQUITE NAMES

Prosopis juliflora is out; *Prosopis glandulosa* is in. In an important 1976 work, the late Arturo Burkart tells us that *juliflora* belongs to a coastal Caribbean species. Our mesquites are *P. glandulosa* var. *qlandulosa*, honey mesquite; *P. glandulosa* var. *torreyana*, western honey mesquite; *P. velutina*, velvet mesquite, and *P. pubescens* screwbean or tornillo.

The honey mesquites are discussed above. Dubiously distinct velvet mesquite is in Hidalgo, Grant, and southwestern Catron Counties. Screw-bean mesquite, with its coiled pods, is in southwestern New Mexico north to Torrance County.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

I have received many compliments on the quality of the *Newsletter* of late. I therefore want to extend a sincere thanks to those of you who contributed articles in 1993. I am privileged to be part of this kind of communication.

Thanks should also go to the Board of Directors who conduct the "behind the scenes" business of the society. Our president, Mimi Hubby, has proven herself a wonderful leader. Our two Jean's (Heflin and Dodd) have given tremendously to the running of the daily business of NPSNM. The conservation committee, behind Ted Hodoba, and often spurred by Tom Wootten and others, is an information source essential to many society members. Our poster is now widely distributed and is earning the society funds with which to perpetuate our goals. We are fortunate to be part of all of this.

This year (1994) marks the fourth year of my editorship of the *Newsletter*. I wonder if there is someone else out there who would like to edit this publication? I feel that no society should become dependent on one person and that responsibilities should be shifted around so that others can obtain experience and have the opportunity to give to the community. If you have an interest in editorship, please contact me or another board member.

Thinking about writing an article? What did you do last year that was interesting? What is unique about your area? What kinds of things would you like to see in the *Newsletter*? I can even edit your ideas for you if you want to send a draft. I can accept articles on any type of diskette or in hardcopy as long as the printed quality is good (dot matrix printers must be set to letter quality and have good ink). Note deadlines on page 2 but send stuff regardless.

All the Best, Tim

Views From the South

(One Member's Opinion)
by Tom Wootten

I'd like to suggest three different topics, all of which deserve action.

1) The House of Representatives passed HR 1845 in October. This bill is to establish the National Biological Survey, a new agency in the Department of Interior, with the purpose of assessing the Nation's biological resources. The agency can perform invaluable services by really getting a good handle on just what and where various plants and animals, particularly those that are rare, are. Unfortunately, HR 1845 includes an amendment sponsored by Representative Billy Tauzin (D-La.), which removes a provision allowing the Secretary of Interior to accept the services of volunteers in conducting the surveys. Surveys such as Christmas Bird Counts made by National Audubon Society chapters were especially criticized, but the amendment apparently would also relate to use of information from surveys such as some of our members have done voluntarily for The Nature Conservancy, BLM, and US Forest Service, as well as individual sightings. A quote from Congressman Tauzin: "Our complaint is that the volunteers, nonscience volunteers with a special agenda....are going to be part and parcel of ...the survey...You start with bad science, you end up with bad science..." Quite frankly, I know a number of people who I suppose are "nonscience" that can provide a great deal of information. Talk about reinventing the wheel and duplication of activities. The agency should have access to information be it from a paid or a voluntary source. The bill now goes to the Senate. Please write or call Senators Bingaman and Domenici expressing your support for the use of volunteers to collect data that could be used in the National Biological Survey.

2) Last July the State of New Mexico revised the Lobbyist Regulation Act. Under the revision, if you wish to write or speak in the name of your organization "in an effort to influence a state agency, board or commission engaged in adopting or amending a rule, regulation, standard, policy or other requirement of general applicability", you must be a registered lobbyist. I have reviewed the 1993 forms, but understand slightly different forms for 1994 are almost available. They seem to be relatively simple, and there is no registration fee or report to make as long as the lobbyist is not paid. A report is required, apparently, if expenses are reimbursed. Conservation Chairs should register, as well as others who might be writing or speaking in the name of your chapter. Writing as an individual is not affected by this change. Please contact Secretary of State, State Capitol, Room 420, Santa Fe, NM 87503, requesting the 1994 forms.

3)Please write to Secretary Bruce Babbitt, Department of Interior, 10th Street & Constitution Ave. NW, Washington DC 20530 (Phone (202) 208-7351 fax (202) 2086956). Encourage the Secretary to continue with his efforts to initiate grazing reform on public lands. Especially refer to public ownership of improvements and water developments paid for with public funds on public lands. These proposals are not new as one is led to believe, as this currently is the practice in US Forest Service and was 'the practice on BLM managed lands as well as other lands managed under Department of Interior prior to the James Watt era. Remind the Secretary that the US House of Representatives voted virtually 3 to 1 to approve most of his proposals and it appeared that a majority in the Senate approved as well. I continue to urge an inventory of public lands to determine where livestock grazing is not the best use of the land either because of other values or because the land will not tolerate economically viable grazing without causing severe ecological damage.

Keep plugging and Happy New Year to all.

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico
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