



NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

March & April 1991

Volume XVI Number 2

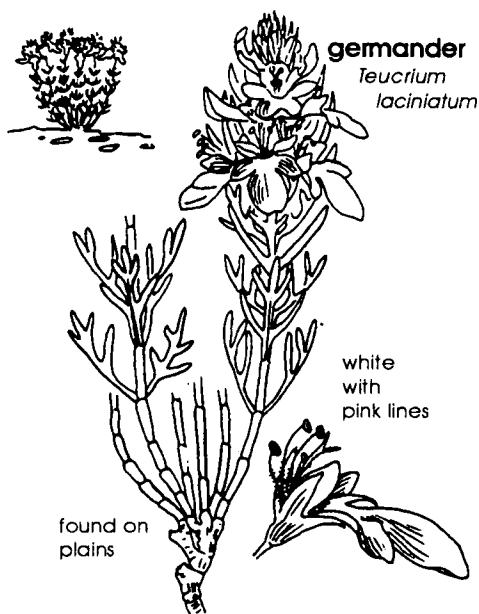
PLANTS OF THE APACHE WOODS

Roger Peterson and Iris David

All of those Bosque birds have to eat and Refuge wildlifers want to know what 's on their platters, so we're making an herbarium for the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. About 400 species have been mounted so far, with at least 200 to go. Of the species we've seen, about 20% are composites. They provide much of our taxonomic fun; what to do with *Machaeranthera* sp. that do not quite fit in any known variety of *M. canescens*, for instance? Or the bewildering array of fleabanes that key to *Erigeron belliadastrum*? Grasses (18%) are next in number of taxa, and most abundant of all in terms of individual plants or ground cover. Six grammas (*Bouteloua* sp.) and five dropseeds (*Sporobolus* sp.) cover most of the Refuge's 57,200 acres. *Polygonaceae* sp. (3%), *Chenopodiaceae* sp. (3%) and *Amaranthaceae* sp. (1%) are important because of their bird-edible seeds and abundance in wet lowlands. They also provide more than their share of identification problems. The champion problem, however, was a sprawling herb of the Rio Grande bed and other moist sites. We couldn't even put a family name to it until we overcame the

prejudice that *all Solanaceae* have alternate leaves, and found it to be *Petunia parviflora*, about as similar to its garden relative as shrews to kangaroos.

The Refuge has five plant provinces. In addition to the lowlands (river and floodplain), the upland zones include the sands (east), a limestone mountain (east), dissected bajadas (west), and igneous-metaphorphic mountains (west). The sands are covered by sand-sage (*Artemisia filifolia*), broom pea (*Dalea scoparius*), and *Sporobolus* sp.. Little San Pascual Mountain (lime and gypsum), has perhaps the most interesting flora. These include ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), the brilliant *Salvia henryi*, and cloakfern (*Notholaena* sp.). The bajadas (alluvial fans) are covered with creosote bush and fluffgrass (*Tridens pulchellus*) and for a while in spring there may be a lovely crop of pale twistflowers (*Streptanthus validus*). The Chupadera Mountains on the western boundary rise 1750 feet above the Rio Grande. They are notable for shrubs like hackberry (*Celtis reticulata*), oak, and juniper, and succulents such as sotol and sacahuista. The floodplain supports a varied but mostly non-natural flora, from cottonwoods



(*Populus fremontii*) and saltcedars (*Tamarix pentandra*) to tiny duckweeds (*Lemna* sp.) and mosquito ferns (*Azolla* sp.). Large areas are dominated by saltgrass (*Distichlis* sp.) and bulrushes (*Scirpus* sp.). Alkali sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*) is one of very few species to dominate areas of both floodplain and uplands.

Our greatest puzzles are plants that have been reported on the Refuge but that we can't find. Roger Mongold, then a UNM undergraduate, did a list for the Refuge in 1985. Though they are unmistakable, we didn't find his arrowgrass (*Triglochin*), sea lavender (*Limonium*), germander (*Teucrium*), zephyr lily (*Zephyranthes*), centaury (*Centaurium*), larkspur (*Delphinium*), hoptree (*Ptelea*), false indigo (*Amorpha*), nor marijuana (*Cannabis*). Also elusive

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Inside.....

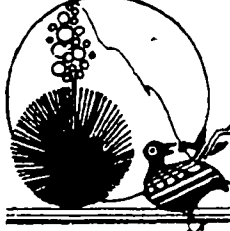
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for us, but recorded by Refuge personnel are hornwort (*Ceratophyllum*), pepperwort (*Marsilea*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium*), and tulip gentian (*Eustoma*).

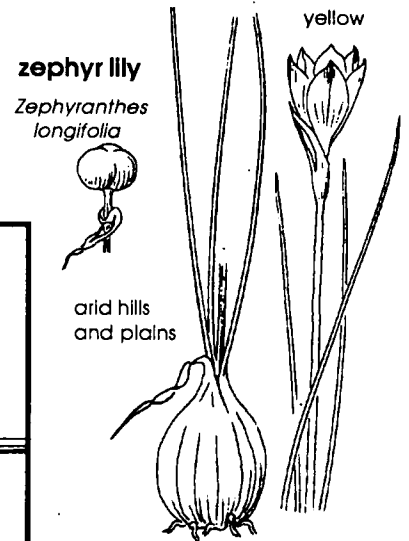
entry signs in the lowlands. The uplands are mostly designated wilderness, so you may hike but not camp without permit.

Editor's note: Illustrations of plants in this issue feature some of the "mystery" plants mentioned in this article.

So come take a walk. Help us look for these elusive species sometime this summer. Much of the Refuge's east side can be reached from Socorro county road A-153 (six miles east of San Antonio). The Chupaderas can be reached from NM-1 (the road to the Bosque) by a road that goes west two miles north of Refuge headquarters and using a culvert to cross under I-25. To reach the best of the bajada canyons travel NM-1 1.35 mi south of headquarters and go west from there. Be sure to obey the restricted



BEAR MOUNTAIN GUEST RANCH
P. O. Box 1163
Silver City, NM 88062



The **Newsletter** is published six times per year by the New Mexico Native Plant Society. This newsletter is available to members of the Society, and others with an interest in native plants. Contact a chapter officer for subscription information.

Articles from the Newsletter may be used by other native plant societies if fully cited to author and attributed to the Newsletter.

The New Mexico Native Plant Society is a non-profit organization dedicated

to the appreciation and conservation of New Mexican native flora. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in plants. 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 member

discounts.

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

Schedule of Membership Fees

Dues are \$8.00 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

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The New Mexico Native Plant Society maintains 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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To begin, I want to welcome a new chapter into the NPS of NM, the Carlsbad Madrone chapter. They are, as you may have guessed, centered in Carlsbad. They have adopted the Madrone portion of their name from the Texas Madrone (*Arbutus texana*). It is being promoted as a landscape and street tree in Carlsbad. Although called the Texas Madrone, the tree does occur in southeast New Mexico. WELCOME Carlsbad and good luck in your undertakings.

With the warm weather we have been having, it could soon be time to start working in the garden and going on field trips. However, we still could have some nasty weather before spring is really here, and that is when a new book is most welcome. Remember that the society has a great selection of books for sale to members at very good prices. Lisa Johnson (NPS-NM Books, P.O. Box 1260, Artesia, NM 88211) continues to manage book sales for us. Thank you, Lisa. Ask your chapter officers for a list of books for sale.

Finally, a big THANK YOU to Tim McKimmie and Rick Castetter who have taken over as co-editors of the newsletter with this, their first issue.

Bob Reeves

EDITORS' MESSAGE

Boy, this first issue took us a lot longer than we expected to get out. There are plenty of logistical problems like capitalization of common names of plants (?), and whether more than one species (sp.) of a common name or a genus abounds in an area. Some compromise was necessary or we'd probably still be typing. Anyway we're glad to be able to tackle this assignment as co-editors and it's been fun as well as a learning experience. Thanks to all those who contributed articles to this issue. Hope you can accept our editing of said pieces. Let us know what you think. All of you are invited to give us some feedback on how you feel about the **Newsletter**. Send us letters, articles, viewpoints, fillers; whatever is on your mind that may interest other Native Plant Society members. If you are using a computer feel free to send us material on a 3 1/2 inch disk.. Disks will be returned. The deadline for the next issue is April 10.

Rick Castetter
Tim McKimmie

NEWS FROM THE BOARD..

Conservation fund, dues increase
At the February 10 meeting of the board of directors, a new conservation was created as part of the NPS of NM treasury. Henceforth 10% of the membership dues will go into this fund. The purpose will be to preserve native plants and plant habitats. Methods will include recognizing and formally recommending specific areas for protection by nominating these areas for designation as "Areas of Critical Environmental Concern", "Areas of Special Interest" or similar official designation recognized by the managing agency. In addition, members may wish to work more closely with various agencies in monitoring plant populations. Many members are excited about taking a more active posture to conserve native plants.

The board also voted to increase the dues from \$8 to \$10 per year. This increase will go into effect on July 1, 1991. In the meantime new members can join or old members may renew at the existing rate of \$8. As an added savings for those so inclined, you may pay for as many years in advance as you like at the current rate of \$8, as long as it is paid before July 1.

PLANTS OF THE SOUTHWEST

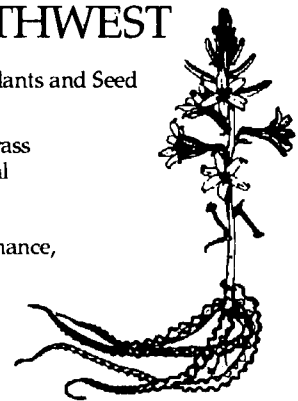
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POSTER COMMITTEE REPORT

Our beautiful poster is now available from the following members.

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- Bob Reeves - Las Cruces - 523-1806
- Jean Dodd - Alamogordo - 434-3041
- Ann Mehaffy - Santa Fe - 983-3784
- Ellen Wilde - Santa Fe - 982-1406
- Lisa Johnston - Artesia - 748-1046
- Luci Nolan - Silver City - 388-5485

It is selling well, but we need your help. As of mid-February we have earned over \$3000, but have not yet recovered the full cost of producing the posters. Please contact one of the above committee members if you can sell a few posters or have suggestions about where they could be sold. Anything above \$5 goes to your local chapter. The posters sell for \$8 to members and \$10 to non members.



CALENDAR

ALBUQUERQUE

7 March, 7:30 p.m.-Ben Haggard will speak on permaculture. The meeting is at the Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd. NE.

4 April, 7:30 p.m.-Rene Galliano-Popp, regional botanist for the US Forest Service will speak to us about endangered species on national forest lands in New Mexico. The meeting is at the Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd. NE.



rose-purple

tulip gentian

Eustoma grandiflorum



wet meadows

OTERO

9 March-Slide program by Jack Bristol and Wynn Anderson of UTEP on their Native Plant Landscaping Project which involves redesigning the El Paso Centennial Museum grounds to reflect the El Paso desert landscape. 1:30 p.m. at the Tularosa Elementary School Cafeteria. From the highway turn east on Higuera in Tularosa, go 3 blocks to the corner of 1st & Higuera (Old Mescalero Road)

24 March (Sunday), 2:00 p.m., Landscaping Seminar, Tularosa Elementary School big room. See March 9 for directions. Speakers include:

Judith Phillips, former Newsletter editor, author of "Southwestern Landscaping with Native Plants", professional landscape designer, founder and owner of Bernardo Beach Native Plant Farm

Lisa Johnston, botanist, former News-

letter editor, former president of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. Presently living in Artesia, she has a background in both native plants and seeds.

Tom Wooten, of Las Cruces, former banker, former owner of Dry Country Plants (a native plant nursery), presently a member of the Board of Directors of The Nature Conservancy in New Mexico, and volunteer extraordinaire!

John Morton, Otero Member, who has a wonderful yard in La Luz and has accumulated a store of knowledge in installing the yard.

LAS CRUCES

13 March-PROGRAM: Dave Richman will talk and show slides of the subject of "Epiphytic Plants" at 7:30 p.m. in Room 190, NMSU Ag Building.

17 March-Field trip to Black Mountain led by Marilyn Harkey. Meet at 9:00 in the Pan Am Center parking lot.

10 April-PROGRAM: To be announced

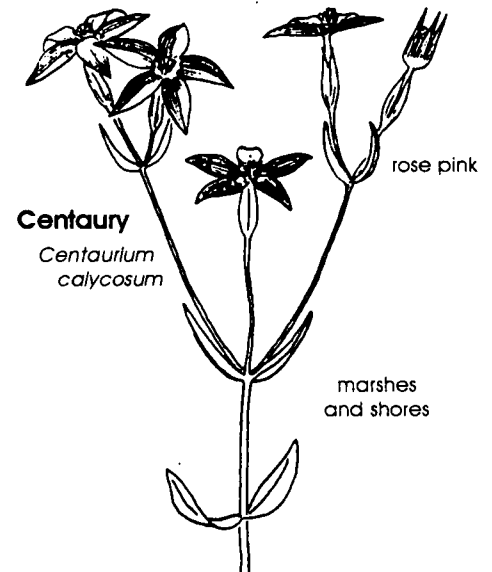
14 April-Field trip to Dona Ana Mountains. Meet at 9:00 a.m.

GILA

9 March, 1:00 p.m.-We will have a field trip to the Fort Bayard petroglyphs. We'll hike about two miles to the petroglyph site. Our leader is Bob O'Keefe (388-5101)

28 March, 7:00 p.m.- Monthly meeting at the Carter House. Program to be announced

14 April, 10:00 a.m.-We will have a field



Centaury

Centaurium calycosum

marshes and shores


trip to Rocky Canyon. The canyon is located along forest road 150 north of North Star Mesa. There are several caves along the trail. A small intermittent stream flows through this canyon which is very appropriately named. Our leader is Gloria Maya. (388-3455)

No firm date for the April meeting

SANTA FE

20 March, 7:30 p.m.-Our speaker will be Jean Heflin, author of "The Beautiful Beardtongues of New Mexico", who will talk on the penstemons of New Mexico. The location is: St. John's College, Lab Building, Room 122.

17 April, 7:30 p.m.-Our speaker will be Bob Sivinski, botanist with the Forestry and Resources Conservation Division of New Mexico. Bob will speak on the endangered plants of New Mexico. The location is: St. John's College, Lab Building, Room 122.



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CHAPTER REPORTS

Albuquerque Ted Hodoba

At our January meeting Dan Scurlock presented a program about the Camino Real Project, a study of the trading route between Santa Fe and Chihuahua, Mexico. Using his extensive knowledge of the traditional uses of native plants, Dan showed slides of the plants and features found along the route. He told us of the various people who traversed this important piece of our historical heritage. He included the stops and towns along this route, many of which still exist today.

Our February meeting was on propagation of native plants. Unfortunately, our speaker was unable to make the meeting at the last minute so Ted Hodoba was drafted on the spot to lead the discussion. Speaking from his own experiences and with help from others in the audience, we had an open meeting with questions and answers about the various techniques required to start native plants from seeds and cuttings. Hopefully, people were able to take home some useful information.

Otero

Member John Stockert presented an excellent slide show for the Otero Chapter in January. John is retired from the National Parks Service and his slides were taken from his personal collection. For this particular program he chose flowering plants at Yellowstone and the Northern Plains.

The beginning slides, however, were from the *Hedeoma todsenii* survey taken in 1990 since some of us never actually did see the plant growing. It is

beautiful and thriving around Domingo Peak and Nogal and neighboring canyons. Many of the plants both at Yellowstone and on the Northern Plains can be found around our area. It is neat to sit there and think, "That plant grows around Capitan. That one grows on Sierra Blanca. That species grows in lots of places in the Sacramentos!"

John and his wife Joanne published a small wildflower book "Common Wildflowers of the Grand Canyon". John also brought "Plants of Yellowstone and

Grand Teton National Parks" by Richard Shaw. At the end of the program John introduced a friend who had just arrived. They had worked at Yellowstone together. It turned out that Charley Pase worked there too. So we had three alumni from Yellowstone in the same place!

Las Cruces - Paul and Betty Shelford

At the February meeting we discussed further chapter activities and agreed to have a table at the Earth Day Fair in April where we hope to sell lots of the new Spring and Summer Wildflower posters. Our conservation chairman, Tom Wootten, brought us up to date on the many activities he has been engaged in and alerted to. The program was presented by Susan Wicks who talked of botanists who came to the Southwest and first identified many of our native plants. Her talk was accompanied by slides of many of the plants bearing their names, either as part of the common name or in the Latin nomenclature. Engelmann Prickly Pear, Fendler Globe Mallow, Jones' Penstemon and Todson's Penneyroyal were among many of the striking slides illustrating her talk.

VIEWS FROM THE SOUTH

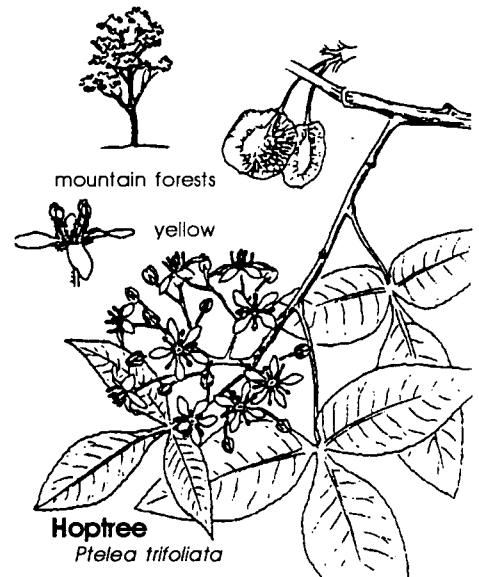
Do you remember old bossie nibbling and nipping off the new tender shoots of grass as it greened up? Sure you do but, you know, old bossie does not have any upper teeth in front, making nipping impossible. Cattle graze by wrapping their tongues around a few shoots of grass and ripping upward so that the lower teeth can sever the top of the plant from the base. Fine and dandy where strong roots are well anchored in firm soil. On the other hand, consider a vegetative propagant of black grama grass which is somewhat like a strawberry plant on its runner trying to get started in our arid environment. Just as the roots seem to get started along comes Bossie to yank out the roots and all.

Many people still have lawns in spite of all my kicking and screaming about water conservation. These lawns can be maintained with adequate water and fertilizer but develop weak root systems without both. Now shift to the public lands of the west. Livestock are mowers, but where is the fertilizer and water

in our arid environment? As any hiker knows, the manure just doesn't break down to help. Add to this the demand on our water system for these European beasts that, of course, are not at all adapted to the southwest.

We should remember that whereas the sod forming grassy plains east of the rocky mountains evolved under grazing pressures of the buffalo, our bunch forming grasses in the southwest did not. It has been a long, long time since camels and ground sloths were foraging in this area. Shame on us for not recognizing this earlier. Bigger shame on us if we do not realize the problem now but just hope it will go away.

On a positive note though, my wife and I had the pleasure of visiting the Audubon Society's Experimental Ranch near Elgin, Arizona and the Sevilleta National Wildlife Preserve near Socorro, NM this past year. The Audubon Ranch is a partnership of private ownership, a US Forest Service "Research Natural



Area" and a Bureau of Land Management "Area of Critical Environmental Concern". Both areas have been free of livestock grazing for a number of years. The fence-line effects are graphic. Visits to both areas were a definite pleasure.

Tom Wootten



Susan Wachter

MAINTAINING THE NATIVE GARDEN

OK, who started the rumor about native landscapes requiring no maintenance? Fine, if you want overgrown, twisted and broken branches, scraggly floral displays and weedy areas. For most of us, a tidy area abounding with healthy plants is more to our liking.

Spring Pruning

Native plants need pruning to keep them healthy and within bounds. Damaged, diseased, and dead parts should be removed as soon as noticed. When to do other pruning depends upon the plant, and its flowering and growth habits. Just as with lilacs, spring flowering shrubs (*Philadelphus microphyllus* for example) should not be pruned before flowering but before mid-summer when next year's flower buds are set. Fall flowering shrubs like Chamisa should be pruned in early spring since they form their flower buds immediately prior to flowering. Plants such as desert willow that sucker when pruned are best cut back in summer.

The type of pruning depends on the plant's needs. Generally I avoid pruning from the top down. Instead I like to begin at the base, eliminating older branches in favor of the younger, more vigorous stems. Once the older growth is removed, move up into the shrub and eliminate crossing and rubbing branches. Prune to accent the natural form of the plant. Once the form is about right, you can then lower the tallest branches if absolutely necessary.

Always cut correctly. Place the cut just above another lateral branch or side bud. Topping or dehorning trees is about the worst thing you can do to a tree. Topping is removing the top portion of a main trunk or lateral. A tree is unable to completely close topping wounds. The inner wood either becomes diseased or sealed off from the rest of the plant, thus eliminating vitally needed stored food. Even the way we remove branches is important since a "flush cut", as was once taught, is far more damaging to a tree than a "target cut". (See diagram)

Spring Tips

1. Spring's new growth is a salad bar for many animals. Chicken wire cages built over the plants will help.
2. Clean the garden well. Remove trash and other debris. Check under pines for white cottony masses which are the overwintering stage for the Pinon Needle Scale. Removing these masses will eliminate many of the insect's eggs.
3. Prune woody deciduous plants as needed. Evergreens such as pines are pruned in mid-to-late spring after the candles have formed. The "candles" or new growth can be snapped back to reduce the current year's growth. Don't remove the entire candle since some of it must be left for next year's buds.
4. Contact your County Extension Service for information about controlling Pine Tip Moth in your area. This critter

is particularly destructive to ponderosa and pinon pines. Other pine problems include Pine Bark Beetle, Pine Aphids and scale, as well as the Pinon Midge.

5. Herbaceous plants and a few select smaller woody plants should be cut back in spring. Chamisa and sagebrush can be cut back to form a more compact plant. Experiment! Cutting into older woody parts will not be as successful as cutting back to just above last year's new growth.

6. Sow seeds outdoors depending upon their germination temperature requirements. Penstemons, for example, require cold temperatures.

7. Indoor seedlings and cuttings will be developing in the spring. As weather turns milder, harden the plants by gradually introducing them to the outside environment for later transplanting.

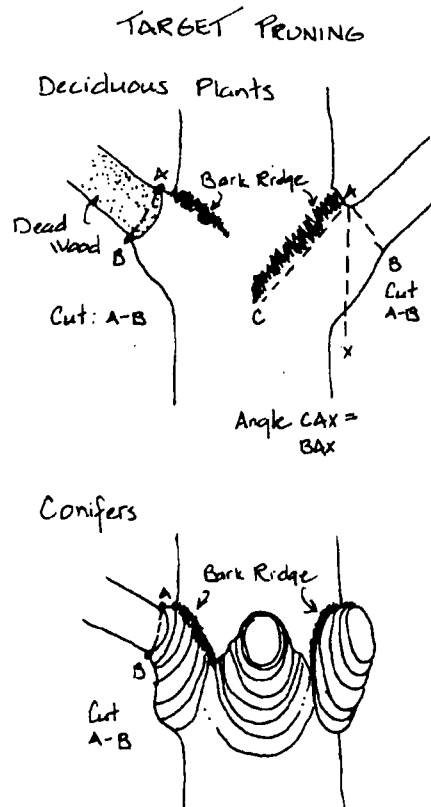
8. Fall flowering plants can be divided in the spring. This is an inexpensive way to increase your garden's flower display.

9. Before planting, prepare garden areas by turning the soil and eliminating caliche. If the soil contains too much sand or clay, amendment may be necessary. If an area is to be seeded later, encourage existing weed seeds to germinate so they can be removed.

10. Watch your plants for insects. Aphids can be found earlier than you might expect. They are usually congregated at the top of the plant and can be eliminated with insecticidal soap sprays or even squashed on the plant. Flea beetles on primroses seem inevitable. You can treat them with carbaryl if desired. Caterpillars are treated with B.T, *Bacillus thuringiensis*. Remember, many of our beautiful butterflies must first be destructive caterpillars.

11. Do not fertilize plants before leaves emerge. A weak fertilizer may be added to new plantings after they become established, which often takes several months. Watch all plants for signs of chlorosis or yellowing and treat them with iron or zinc supplements as necessary.

Look for "Summer Tips" next issue



NEW SOUTHWEST ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Melanie Florence

People from various conservation organizations in Las Cruces, including the Native Plant Society, are organizing the Southwest Environmental Center (SEC). It is to be a non-profit center whose goal is to serve as a clearinghouse for environmental information and a focal point of environmental concern in southern New Mexico.

The SEC is important for several reasons. Southern New Mexico is at a critical juncture in its development. The region's population is growing rapidly, particularly in the Las Cruces area. As average incomes remain low, there is pressure to increase economic development. Environmental protection has never been a priority in this politically conservative area with traditional ties to extractive and defense related industries, ranching and agriculture.

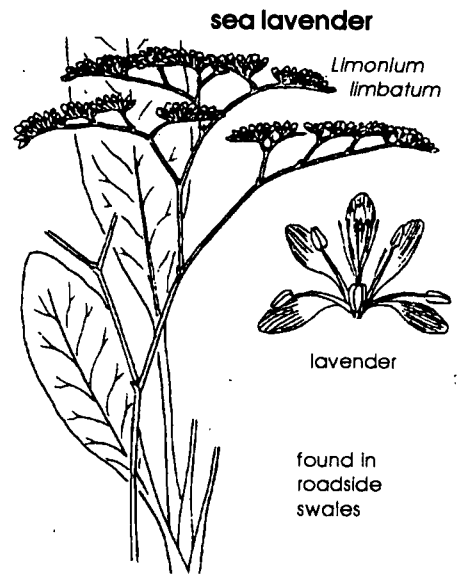
Other important issues include: weak or absent local land use planning; controversial management of public lands; BLM wilderness protection; efforts to dispose of out-of-state waste in the area; salt buildup in soils from irrigation; depletion and pollution of water resources; air pollution; proposed nuclear waste dumps; illegal toxic waste dumping; and heavy pesticide use.


While concern for the environment is growing, two factors hamper current efforts to protect the environment: the lack of a central clearinghouse of up-to-date information about environmental issues and ideas; and the lack of an efficient mechanism for environmental groups to coordinate and communicate with each other. The SEC will address both these needs.

The following programs and services are planned: a quarterly newsletter focusing on regional environmental issues; a small library of specialized materials not readily available elsewhere (government planning documents, environmental periodicals, "how to" publications); a space for public events; a curriculum center containing materials

and ideas for environmental classroom activities; and a bookstore.


The SEC will rely heavily on volunteer help. A recent fundraiser (Feb. 11) was heavily attended and over \$1200 was raised during an evening of food, music, and fun. The goal is to hire a full time director as well as other paid staff in order to meet organizational objectives in an effective manner and to provide continuity. Monetary support will consist of volunteer contributions, membership dues, and grants from private foundations and corporations. Interested persons should contact Melanie Florence, Rt. 1 Box 711, La Mesa, NM 88044 (525-3529) or Kevin Bixby, director, 525-1532.



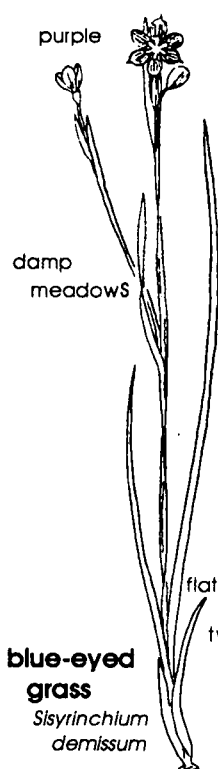


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Many thanks to Robert Dewitt Ivey for permission to use his wonderful drawings from "Flowering Plants of New Mexico, second edition, in our newsletter



The FLORA OF NORTH AMERICA project

In late 1991 the first of 12 volumes of the FNA is scheduled to appear. This massive undertaking to describe all native and naturalized plants of the United States and Canada, is a binational effort of more than 20 major botanical institutions. The Missouri Botanical Garden serves as the organizational center for the FNA project. The project will include approximately 17,000 species of vascular plants. The FNA project is possible only because the information will be contained in a computerized data base (TROPICOS). It is partially funded by the National Science Foundation. A newsletter is also being published by the FNA Association. For information write FNA Newsletter, POB 299, St. Louis, MO, 63166.



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RARE PLANT SURVEYS

In order to protect populations of rare or endangered plants in the wild, we must first pinpoint where these plants grow and then document their numbers and state of health. Last year the Native Plant Society in partnership with The Nature Conservancy did that for a number of species growing on BLM Lands in south-central New Mexico.

The biggest project was in the Sacramento mountains where we searched for Todsens Pennyroyal (*Hedeoma todsenii*), which was thought to be the most endangered native plant in the state. Joining me in this survey over several weeks were Jean Dodd, Cleo Harris, John Stockert, and Lucile Wilson from Alamogordo, and Melanie Florence, Herb and Chris Ruetzel, Zeno Wicks, and Tom Wootten (principal field assistant on the

project), from Las Cruces. This survey resulted in the discovery of nine major new populations of this beautiful golden-flowered pennyroyal scattered over a large rugged area in the Sacramentos.

Other projects with NPS involvement occurred near Socorro in the Ladron, Sawtooth and Horse Mountains. Participants included Ted Hodoba, and Judith and Roland Phillips of Albuquerque and Tom Wootten of Las Cruces. Among the rare plant species that were documented were *Castilleja organorum* on Horse Mountain, *Erigeron rhizomatus* in the Sawtooth, and *Mamillaria wrightii* and *Schrophularia parviflora* in the Ladrons.

Now that these populations have been located and mapped, the BLM is moving ahead on our recommendations to give the biological "hotspots" where they grow, recognition and added protection. Heartfelt thanks go to all the above named folks from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico who furthered the cause of rare plant conservation in 1990. More to come next year.

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