

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO  
May 1979 Newsletter

Upcoming meetings:

Santa Fe Chapter - May 23, 7:30 p.m. at St. John's College, two films "Planting and Transplanting" and "Pruning Practices", will be shown in Room 118 of the Laboratory Building. The films are produced by the Brooklyn Botanic Garden.

Las Cruces Chapter - We hear the southern New Mexico group of NPS is getting together often for field trips and meetings. We'd like to report your events in the newsletter, so drop us a note c/o Rt. 4, Puesta del Sol, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501.

Field trips with Myra McCormick of Bear Mountain Guest Ranch, Silver City - Tours leave from the Guest Ranch and charges range from \$5.00 to \$15.00 depending on if you ride in Myra's bus or drive your own car.

May 19,20 - Guadalupe Canyon overnight bird/wildflower tour; see Mexican border "escapes"

June 2,3 - Edible Wild Plant Workshop; pot herb/salad greens identification

Banner Year for Spring Flowers

Myra McCormick reports that the Florida Mountains of south central New Mexico have rarely had such a display of blooms as they have this year. Rockhound State Park is a good base camp from which to explore this area. Incidentally, the roads in the Floridas are few and rough.

Bill Isaacs and his class went to Sitting Bull Falls recently and found a lush display of native plants. This limestone canyon with year-round water boasts a large number of plant species: Fendler cliffbush, Mexican madrone, silktassel, and the rare and endangered yellow columbine, Aquilegia chaplinii, to name but a few. There are picnic facilities and an easy walk to the falls. They also found the rare cactus Coryphata sneedii on their travels near Carlsbad.

For Every Child a Tree

1979 is the International Year of the Child as proclaimed by the United Nations. "For Every Child a Tree" is a program whose goal is to get a tree planted for each of the world's children. The Sahel has suffered drought and is threatened by the advancing desert. The trees will check this advance and, through this project, children should become aware of the need to preserve the ecological balance around them. For \$10 per tree you can take part in this world campaign against desertification and help rehabilitate the populations of the Sahel. Send your contribution to the International Union for Child Welfare (IUCW) General Secretariat, Geneva, Switzerland or write to the National Commission on the International Year of the Child at 600 E Street, N.W., Suite 505, Washington D.C. 20471.

Big I Beautification Project

Although the Big I Beautification Project has received media coverage elsewhere, we want to commend Butch Harris and his committee for following through on a good idea. This spring volunteers planted recommended native plants in a general landscape plan on the banks along the I-40 and I-25 interchange in Albuquerque. The plants were donated by local nurseries and private individuals. Hopefully, most of the plants will prosper and bring a little homegrown beauty to the urban area.

Have You Paid Your Dues?

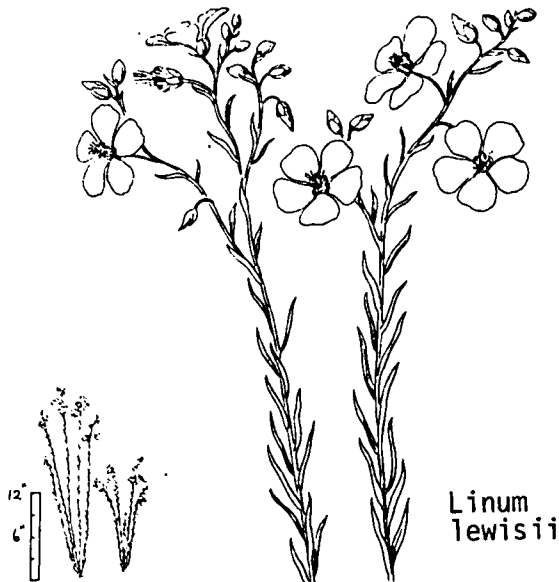
We issued a call for 1979 dues to all members back in January. We are short on funds and must now say that if you do not pay your dues by June 1, we will cease sending you a newsletter. Mail your check, \$6.00 for individual, \$8.00 for families and now only \$4.00 for students and senior citizens to Carol Dimeff, Rt. 4, Puesta del Sol, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

LEWIS FLAX, "BLUE FLAX" (*Linum lewisii*)  
Flax family. Blooms sky blue. March-September 3,500-9,500 feet  
Saskatchewan and Alaska to northern Mexico.

A slender plant from 1 to 2 feet tall with several erect stems and small, narrow leaves. The beautiful flowers, which are normally sky blue, may sometimes be almost white. They are about 1 inch across, and have veins of darker blue.

From very early times cultivated flax, *Linum usitatissimum*, has furnished the world with linen from its fiber and linseed oil from its seeds. Although of no commercial value, our native Lewis flax has found several uses.

The Klamath Indians cultivate the plant for its strong fibers used in baskets, mats, fish nets, etc. In New Mexico some of the old-timers of Spanish descent use the flax seeds as a poultice to treat infected wounds and reduce swellings and boils. The poultice is made by grinding dry flax seeds, mixing one teaspoonful of corn meal, and adding enough boiling water to make a paste.



COLORADO COLUMBINE, "BLUE COLUMBINE" (*Aquilegia coerulea*)  
Buttercup family. Blooms blue to whitish June-July 8,000-11,000 feet  
Southwestern Montana to northern New Mexico and northern Arizona.

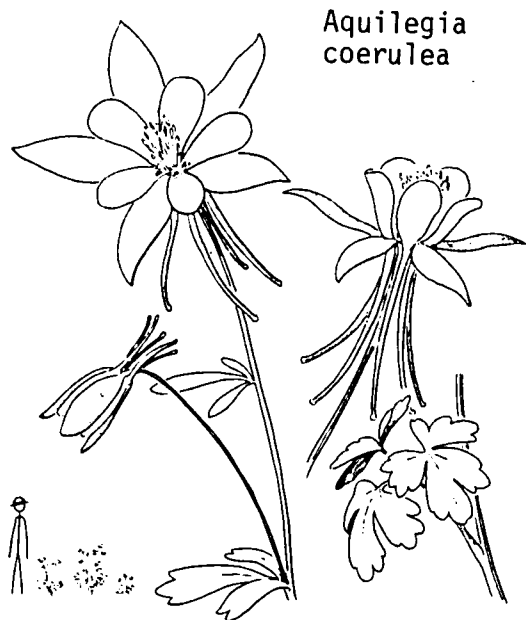
(This is the flower shown on the cover.)

Few indeed are the flowers of the west that can compare with the Colorado columbine in beauty. The blossoms, occasionally as much as 6 inches in diameter, vary somewhat in color from blue to lavender and even white.

In typical specimens the conspicuous outer part of the flower is blue while the smaller petals arranged around the center are white.

This is the state flower of Colorado. In many places it has become a victim of its own beauty through digging and picking by thoughtless people - such vandalism is now prohibited by Colorado state law.

The flower spurs contain nectar which can be reached comfortably by only the "long-tongued" insects and hummingbirds. Some of the other insects, however, manage to get the sweet nectar by cutting holes in the spurs.



# ***Santa Fe Native Plant Sale***

May 19th is the annual Plant Sale of the Santa Fe Chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The sale will be outdoors at the Institute of American Indian Arts on Cerrillos Road from 9 to 5. There will be more participating vendors than ever selling a wide variety of plants and books. (All of the plants illustrated in this issue of the newsletter will be for sale.) Volunteers are needed now for poster distribution and for setting up, selling plants and staffing a NPS booth on Saturday.

Here are this year's vendors and their offerings:

Agua Fria Nursery, Santa Fe - wildflowers and shrubs  
Cerrillos Nursery, Santa Fe - bedding plants, vegetable starts, foliage houseplants, hanging baskets, cactii and color spots  
Dean Haggard, Santa Fe - orchids and houseplants  
Jack's Mini Roses, Belen - many varieties of miniature roses  
The Herb Shop, Santa Fe - plants of a dozen or more types of herbs  
Plants of the Southwest, Cerrillos - native wildflowers (seeds and plants), shrubs, trees, grasses, books  
Valerie Walsh will provide an exhibit on solar greenhouses.  
The Future Farmers of America will be selling landscaping plants as well as refreshments.

If you can help, call Beverley Spears (982-4926) and tell her what you want to do and what hours on Saturday you are available.

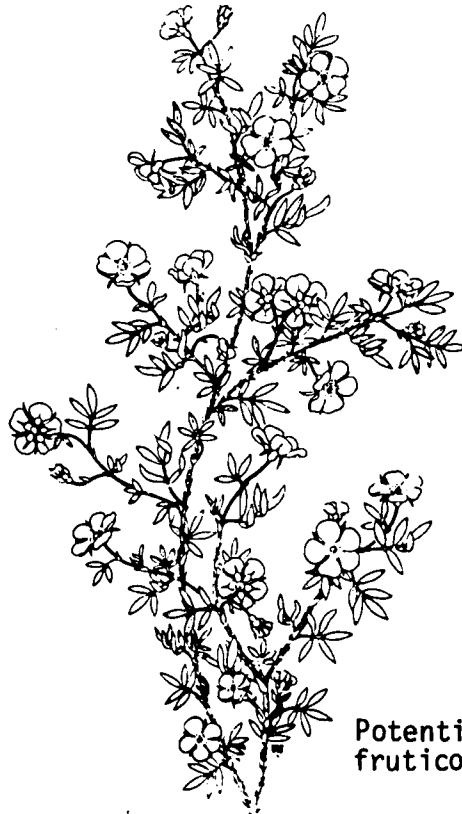
We also need to borrow garden carts or children's wagons for transporting plants to cars. Put your name on the cart and let Beverley Spears know that you will bring it to the sale by 9 a.m. Saturday.

Here is a list of the native plants that will be offered for sale:

<u>Aquilegia coerulea</u>	blue columbine
<u>Artemesia nova</u>	black sage
<u>A. tridentata</u>	big sage
<u>Campanula rotundifolia</u>	blue bells
<u>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</u>	chamisa
<u>Erigeron species</u>	daisies
<u>Eschscholtzia californica</u>	California poppy
<u>Fallugia paradoxa</u>	Apache plume
<u>Fragaria sp.</u>	strawberry
<u>Gaillardia aristata</u>	blanketflower
<u>Gutierrezia sarothrae</u>	snakeweed
<u>Ipomopsis aggregata</u>	skyrocket
<u>Jamesia americana</u>	waxflower

"HARD TO FIND" NATIVE PLANTS, Continued

<u>Linum lewisii</u>	blue flax
<u>Lobelia cardinalis</u>	cardinal flower
<u>Melampodium leucanthum</u>	blackfoot daisy
<u>Mentzelia pumila</u>	evening-star
<u>Oenothera missouriensis</u>	evening primrose
<u>O. speciosa</u>	evening primrose
<u>Penstemon barbatus</u>	scarlet bugler
<u>P. bridgesii</u>	
<u>P. palmeri</u>	white
<u>P. parryi</u>	pink
<u>P. pseudospectabilis</u>	hot pink
<u>P. speciosus</u>	lavendar
<u>P. strictus</u>	blue
<u>Potentilla fruticosa</u> (8 varieties)	shrubby cinquefoil
<u>P. thurberi</u>	strawberry potentilla
<u>Ratibida columnaris</u>	coneflower (red and yellow)
<u>Rhus trilobata</u>	threeleaf sumac
<u>Rosa woodsii</u>	wild rose
<u>Rudbeckia hirta</u>	black-eyed Susan
<u>Salvia greggii</u>	(shrubby mint, red flowers)
<u>Solidago sp.</u>	goldenrod
<u>Stachys coccinea</u>	(herbaceous mint, red flowers)
<u>Verbascum thapsus</u>	mullein
<u>Verbena bipinnatifida</u>	verbena
<u>Yucca baccata</u>	datil yucca
<u>Y. elata</u>	soaptree yucca
<u>Y. glauca</u>	narrowleaf yucca
<u>Zinnia grandiflora</u>	prairie zinnia



Potentilla  
fruticosa

## BLM WILDERNESS INVENTORY . . . Update\*

Less than two percent of the total acreage (78 million acres) in the State of New Mexico is currently protected as Wilderness. Wilderness areas, as officially designated by Congress, are reserved from development, but you can hunt, trap and hike there. The President has approved the 504,000 acres of Forest Service land in New Mexico that came out of RARE II. The BLM presently has 795,000 acres of its 13 million in New Mexico set aside as Wilderness. The National Park Service has an additional 50,000 acres and the Fish and Wildlife Service has 40,000 acres.

The BLM is now undertaking a review of its roadless areas that parallels with the RARE II process. The BLM has found 5.75 million acres or about 40 percent of its acreage in New Mexico to be either roadless or areas with roads that are not maintained. 1.8 million acres of this have been designated for intensive inventory by the Director of the BLM. Thus, 4.0 million acres of their roadless areas have already been dropped from consideration and we have only until June 9th to submit requests to restore some of these to inventory review. While being inventoried the land can't be developed, so it is useful to seek the inventory status just to "buy time". But the inventory process is only the first stage in the BLM's Wilderness review. Resources that stand to be lost by a Wilderness designation will be thoroughly evaluated before a recommendation is made. Political pressures from ranchers, oil and coal developers and uranium interests have, historically, been most influential.

The New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee, sponsored by the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, other professional groups and individuals, is interested in getting a sample of every biological ecosystem in New Mexico reserved as Wilderness. The Committee is heavily represented by members of the Wilderness Committees of the Las Cruces and El Paso chapters of the Sierra Club because much of the present BLM Intensive Inventory acreage occurs in the Las Cruces District (i.e. 1.4 out of the 1.8 million acres). The hardest battle fought so far was over the Bisti Badlands in the San Juan basin of northwestern New Mexico, where railroads and coal development threatens 70 million years of unique geological history and dinosaur fossils contained therein. (Sorry folks, the deadline for comments on this one has already passed.)

Encouraged by a recent victory to get the Mescalero Sands, one of the few remaining examples of southern great plains in New Mexico (Roswell District), back into the inventory category, the Committee is now determining the wilderness value of two areas in northern Taos County. These might be representative of the Western Wheatgrass range and sagebrush-type vegetation. If you can offer letter writing help, please call Roger Peterson at 983-7559 or contact your local Sierra Club office for more information. The BLM invites public participation and comments at this time.

\*Notes taken from lecture by Roger Peterson of the New Mexico Wilderness Study Committee at our April meeting. Thank you, Roger.

Classified Ads

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**GRASSLAND RESOURCES**

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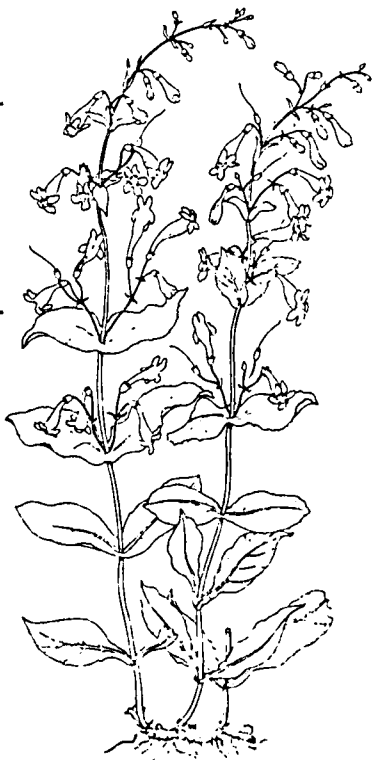
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c/o Rt. 4, Puesta del Sol  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501



Penstemon pseudospectabilis

