Native Plant Society of New Mexico

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

May/June 1996 Volume XXI Number 3

YARROW

Sunflower family
(Achillea lanulosa)

reprinted from *Wild Plants of the Pueblo Province: Exploring Ancient and Enduring Uses*, 1995, by Bill Dunmire and Gail Tierney

Finely dissected fern-like leaves that are highly aromatic when crushed give away this fairly tall mountain-growing herb. It flowers profusely through most of the summer with heads of white forming flat-topped clusters at the top of each stem.

Yarrow thrives where the ground is somewhat wet, such as along roadsides, where pavement runoff adds moisture, or in meadows of the ponderosa pine ecozone and higher. About the only place you'll see it from the trails we cover in Wild Plants of the Pueblo Province are those passing through the riparian zone at the bottom of Frijoles Canyon or perhaps in the meadows around the Ponderosa Pine Campground.

The genus name, Achillea, comes from Achilles, the famed Greek warrior, who supposedly used yarrow in staunching the flow of blood from the wounds of his men. Thus, its pharmaceutical history goes well back in time. In fact, the volatile oils and acids contained in the leaves have known astringent qualities and also have been associated with treating colds and hemorrhoids and for hair and scalp care. These attributes are no doubt the reason that yarrow herbal teas are available to this day in many health food stores throughout the United States and Europe.

Most Indian peoples, including the Navajos and certainly the Pueblo tribes, have long known of the medicinal values of yarrow. Various Tewa-speaking Puebloans have chewed on or made a tea from the flowers, leaves, or roots to treat stomach disorders and toothaches.

People from Zuni Pueblo know of the cooling effect possessed by the ground leaves of yarrow and have applied them to burns; at San Juan the leaves have been used in this way for sore lips. Other documented medicinal uses include combating chills at Cochiti and fever at Picuris and other northern pueblos.

It has been said that yarrow is eaten or used as flavoring at some pueblos, but it seems more likely that even when mixed with food, there is a medicinal reason for including this plant in the diet.

Editor's note: In February, 1996, *Wild Plants of the Pueblo Province* won a Southwest Book Award, presented by the Border Regional Library Association.

Inside...

Notice: Elections/Nominations

The Biannual election of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico is being scheduled for later this summer. All of the society officers and directors-at-large will be placed on the ballot. A committee now working on the nominations consists of Jean Heflin, Greg Magee, and Mary Whitmore. Suggestions for nominations may be sent to them or any board member. In addition, the bylaws stipulate that "additional nominations may be made by any group of 5 or more persons". Nominations may be sent to the committee or any board member. They must be received by June 1. The ballot will appear in the next issue of the *Newsletter*.

Society Dues to Increase

Membership dues for the Native Plant Society of New Mexico will increase from $10 to $12 as of January 1, 1996. Members who wish to do so, however, may prepay as many years as they wish at the current rate of $10 per year. Life memberships are also available.

The board has also voted to distribute $2 of each members dues to their respective chapter. It has not been determined however, how member affiliation with a particular chapter will be determined.

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

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. Articles from the *Newsletter* may be reprinted if fully cited to author and attributed to the *Newsletter*.

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. We encourage the use of suitable native plants in landscaping to preserve the state's unique character and as a water conservation measure. Members benefit from chapter meetings, field trips, publications, plant and seed exchanges, and educational forums. A wide selection of books is available at discount. The society has also produced two New Mexico wildflower posters by artist Niki Threlkeld. Contact our Poster Chair or Book Sales representative for more information. Call chapter contacts for local information.

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, NPSNM, POB 5917, Santa Fe, NM 87502-5917

Newsletter Contributions

Please direct all contributions for the newsletter to Tim McKimmie, editor. See address below or email to tmckimmi@lib.nmsu.edu

Deadline for the next newsletter is June 1.

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Mary Helen Brunt	885-4532	2907 W. Colfax, Carlsbad 88220

SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE: Our main address is: NPSNM, POB 5917, Santa Fe NM 87502-5917. See above for membership and newsletter correspondence.

Book Sales: Lisa Johnston 748-1046
1814 West Currier, Artesia 88210

Poster Chair: Ellen Wilde 982-1406
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STUDYING THE FLORA OF NEW MEXICO THROUGH THE LENS AND ON THE SCREEN

by Jack Carter

Over the past 50 years the teaching of the plant sciences in the nation's schools and colleges has continued to diminish. If one simply counts the number of pages devoted to the study of whole plants in textbooks that have come to the marketplace over the past 30 or 40 years it becomes obvious that botany is slowly being removed from the curriculum. For a more accurate analysis, examine the class and laboratory schedule (If there is a laboratory schedule) of most high schools and count the days botany is being taught. At the same time trips into the field to study the regional flora and fauna have, in many schools, become a thing of the past. Natural history and ecology are commonly studied from a textbook. Certainly this criticism is not due all schools and teachers, and in fact some teachers, often in rural schools, do an excellent job of teaching the local flora in an ecological setting. But for the nation, the future of the plant sciences is surely bleak.

This is not the time or place to consider all the reasons and ramifications of this slow extinction of plants from the curriculum. However, it is important that those individuals and organizations who are interested in promoting the teaching of the plant sciences through the study of ecology and regional natural history make a concerted effort to work with teachers at all levels to strengthen the study of plants. The Native Plant Society of New Mexico is accepting this challenge and is taking a first step towards working with those teachers who wish to include more plant biology in their courses.

In an attempt to encourage teachers and their students to become familiar with the local and regional flora, the NPSNM is planning the development of a series of slide programs that will be specific to nine regions of New Mexico. We plan to start with the collection of 40 to 50 slides of the common plants in each of the nine regions. These will be those plant species that students can step outside of their homes and schools and observe in the immediate vicinity. With the slide collection we will provide a short statement describing the distinguishing characteristics of each plant and the life zone in which it occurs. We hope to provide slides that will demonstrate growth habit, flower and fruit characteristics,and beauty.

The board of directors of the NPSNM feels certain this is the type of activity in which the organization should become involved and in which they can contribute. At the same time, if the ultimate objective is to be reached, participation will be needed from those with camera skills, including the membership, friends with botanical interests, teachers and their students. We need interested individuals from throughout New Mexico and the surrounding states who are interested in contributing to the teaching of botany in their regional schools and colleges.

Call for Slides

An archival system, including a database system for cataloging each slide, has been established. We will need to receive original 2x2 Kodachrome or equally reproducible (not Ectochrome) slides of high quality that will become the master set from which duplicate slides can be made for distribution. We will need some data describing the plant, i.e., where the photograph was taken, the best common or scientific name the photographer can provide, and if there is some question, a small twig from the plant in a plastic bag. In other words the plant must be properly identified for the teachers and students. A data sheet for each slide will be prepared, including credit to the photographer. Individuals interested in participating in the program are encouraged to request a copy of the data sheet from from the address shown below. The slides submitted will become the property of the NPSNM.

Finally the NPSNM will duplicate the slides, place them into sets with the appropriate descriptions and make them available to interested teachers, schools, colleges or other individuals and organizations at the lowest possible cost.

We want this to become a grassroots program supported by those who are interested in the conservation of the native flora of New Mexico and the education of people of all ages to become better acquainted with the natural world. We want teachers and their students, as well as parents and grandparents, to see the beauty and science in our native flora.

If you have questions or would like further information please contact:
Jack Carter
PO Box 1244
Silver City, NM 88062-1244
505-388-9221

CALENDAR

ALBUQUERQUE

May 2 "Cactus and Succulents we can grow in Albuquerque" by Paul Shaw. 7:30 Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas.
May 4 Field trip to west mesa. 9 am.
June 6 "Plant and Habitat Releationships" by Teresa Prendusi. 7:30 Albuquerque Garden Center.

GILA

May 19 Field trip to Gila Bird Sanctuary. 8:00 am, WNMU Fine Arts Bldg. south lot.
June 16 Field trip to Bead Spring, Mogollon Mtns. 8:00 am, WNMU Fine Arts, south lot.

OTERO

May 4 Field trip to Laborcita Canyon. 9 am La Luz Post Office.
May 11 Plant Sale preparation. 2:00 pm. Pat Nott's
May 18 Plant Sale. Garden Center, Oregon and 10th. 8:00-1:00.
May 25-26 Cloudcroft Mayfair booth. 9:00 - 5:00.
June 1 Field trip to Three Rivers. Meet at Three Rivers Store 9:30 am.
June 29 "Fort Stanton Cave" by "spelunkers. Dinner at Claypools. 6:30 pm.

LAS CRUCES

May 8 "Spiders and their Kin" by Dave Richman. 7:30 SW Environmental Center, 1494 C. Solano.
May 12 Field trip to Robledo Mtns. 7 am Mayfield High School.
June 12 "Flora of the Chihuahuan Borderlands" by Rafael Corral. 7:30 SW Environmental Center.
June 16 Field trip to Sacramento's. 7 am KMart Hwy 70.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Gila-Martha Carter

Glenn Lovig, President, presided at the January 19 meeting of the Gila NPS with 38 members and guests present. Annual dues should be paid to Treasurer, Linda Keehfuss. The Endowmemt Committee chairman, Jack Carter, reported that $1,500 had been invested with American Funds for the future purpose of assisting the education of a student of botany. "An Introduction to The Wilderness—What is the National Wilderness Preservation System?" was the program by Alice Cohen, Wilderness Education Specialist, Gila National Forest. Ms. Cohen described the history and background of the National Wilderness Preservation System and the role of the U. S. Forest Service in the management of wilderness. The audience was engaged in activities relating to wilderness preservation using maps of wilderness areas within the United States and questions concerning these areas. Ms. Cohen works in education programs for various levels throughout the Southwest. She has used the Native Plants of New Mexico Spring/Summer and Summer/Fall posters in her work with the schools in our area.

Fifty members and guests attended the February 16 meeting of the GNPS. Jack Carter reported on the recent Board of Directors' of the NPSNM meeting held February 10 at the UNM Field Station located on the Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge north of Socorro. He encouraged each member to join the state organization and explained the benefits of membership in NPSNM. The program was presented by James and Julie Fitzgerald, owners of Premier Nursery and Landscaping Design. James discussed native and drought tolerant trees, shrubs and grasses suitable for this area and drip irrigation systems he uses to reduce water use and establish new plantings. Julie showed slides of native plants suitable for the Silver City area. Many questions came from the audience of mostly new residents who are interested in establishing landscapes compatible with our arid climate.

March 15 The joint meeting of the Southwestern NM Audubon chapter and the GNPS was attended by 50 members and] I guests. Marian Zimmerman introduced Gene and Elisabeth Simon. Elisabeth began with a description of what one has to learn about animals and nature to become a successful rancher. Gene followed with a review of what is happening in the cattle and ranching industry. His presentation covered changes in government policy, ranching economics and practices and public opinion. They closed their presentation with a description of the Malpais Group recently formed in SW New Mexico and SE Arizona.
Social hour hosts Nancy and Harold Bogin and May and Stuart O'Byrne served birthday cake honoring Gene Simon's 80th birthday .

Additional information on Gene & Elisabeth Simon:
Gene Simon is a retired newspaper publisher who has been ranching with his wife, Elisabeth, in the Faywood area south of Silver City for nearly 23 years. Their interest is in reducing the polarization that exists in so many western communities between ranchers and conservationists.

CHAPTER REPORTS

Otero-Jean Dodd

Dr. Richard Spellenberg talked about the Chihuahuan Desert 2-16-96 to a standing room only crowd. He began with the different deserts of the west and showed slides to illustrate the difference in vegetation. Typically the Chihuahuan Desert has a dry winter and a wet summer and is a mesquite,shrub,limestone desert. Some of the common plants shown on the slides are creosote, acacias, mimosas, ocotillas, apache plume, yellow bells (*Tecoma stans*). pea bush (Dalea formosa), bladder pods,,desert willow. The relationship between plants and their pollinaters was explored. When *Dalea formosa* is ready to be pollinated, the blossoms will have one yellow petal. After pollination, the yellow petal changes color to blend in with the rest of the petals so the pollinater knows to go on to another plant. The yucca and its pollinator has a very special relationship. Dr. Spellenberg brings examples of different moths used to pollinate different kinds of yuccas. The moth gathers pollen, then lays its eggs in the plant, fertilizing the yucca with pollen in the process. The moth hatchlings develop inside the yucca's fruit, feeding on yucca seeds until they chew through the fruit and drop to the ground. There they burrow into the soil and emerge the following year. To write or read about what Dr. Spellenberg says and the slides used is not in any way comparable to being in the audience or class. He is superb..

On 3-22-96 the Otero Chapter enjoyed a trip to Valley of Fires near Carrizozo. At the Visitor's Center one of our members got us a supply of Malpais Nature Trail Guides put out by the BLM. The guide gives information about plants along the trail,especially at numbered stops marked by wooden posts, wildlife including sketches of birds, and how the lava beds were formed, settled, and cooled. One juniper tree is over 400 years old. Plant roots help to break the lava into soil particles. Lava tubes,gypsum caves, ice caves,and bats are included as well as a pressure ridge, and some human history. Plants we recognized were pricklypear, several artemesias including *Artemesia ludoviciana* or Louisiana Sage, lots of algerita,4-wing saltbush, rabbitbrush,Apache plume,Wright's silktassel,, littleleaf sumac,brickelbush, mesquite, one-seeded juniper,*Yucca baccata* and *Yucca elata*, bear grass, mormon tea, penstemon, netleaf hackberry, mallows, the remains of desert holly,Christmas cactus,cholla, cowtongue cactus, haystack, Hedgehog cactus, soltol,*Daleaformosa,* very,very large *Aloysia wrightii*. The only plants in bloom were the yellow bladderpod mustards and Desert phlox-*Ipomopsis pumila*.

March 11. Eight hardy individuals took 5 hours to hike the 6.4 mile, moderately steep, Caballero Canyon Trail (T-103). This is one of 5 trails that thread down the west slope of the Sacramento Mountains south of where US 70 passes through the ridge. The hike was sponsored by the Otero Chapter of the NPSNM. Arrangements were made to drive the hikers the 9 miles from the meeting point at the High Rolls Grocery Store/Gas Station to the trailhead along West Side Road (Forest Road 90) south of High Rolls. The trail varies in gradient up to about 30%. From the upper trailhead, the path follows a rocky, abandoned, narrow road through pinion, juniper, oak, and scattered ponderosa pine. At mile 0.7 from the trail's upper end begins superior views to the north of a high, upturned ridge capped by Hershberger Peak to the northwest. The secluded, remote canyon area between the two landmarks was named Hell's Hole many years ago! After the bottom of the canyon was reached at mile 2.1, a lunch stop was taken. Here, waterfall results from a small stream that falls from the end of an old pipe near. After lunch a dry waterfall had to be bypassed. At mile 4.3, the trail through Caballero Canyon ends where it joins the Alamo Canyon Trail (T-104). From here, it is 2.1 miles to the mouth of Alamo Canyon. Vehicles were parked earlier at the lower end of the Alamo Canyon. Due to the drought, only one wildflower, a white Bladderpod was found.

Las Cruces-Paul & Betty Shelford

The speaker at our March 13th meeting was Dr. Ted Samis, Professor in the NMSU Department of Agronomy and Horticulture. His subject was Irrigation in Horticulture." For successful gardening,one must balance the amount of water applied to the amount of growth desired. The application rate of water should equal the infiltration rate of the soil. If one digs down to determine the normal depth of plant roots, and then pushes down a sharpened metal water key after watering to determine how deep the water has infiltrated the soil, one will see how effectively he or she has watered. If the probe depth equals the depth of the roots, then the water application is right. If the probe is deeper than the roots, one has overwatered. If a pine tree begins to drop its needles, it is stressed and requires more water for normal, healthy growth. Some plants, such as Oleander and Texas Sage do poorly if overwatered because the excess water prevents the roots from drawing oxygen from the soil. Conversely, local pecan orchards require 60 in. of water a year.

On March 17th, Will Beattie led ten other members on a field trip into Spring Canyon in the Florida Mountains. There were few wildflowers blooming other than Verbena andBladderpod. Despite high winds, they did hike up into the mountains. At one point they observed a herd of about a dozen Ibex watching them. On March 22nd, six members and one guest braved blustery winds to pick up trash along State Highway 478 south of Las Cruces. This was our third trash pickup between the signs that state "This area maintained by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico."

Albuquerque - Lu Bennett

In February Aspen Evans, a native plant grower and horticulturist at Santa Ana Nursery shared her wealth of knowledge about collecting seeds, cleaning and germinating seeds and propagating plants from cuttings. Experience and talking to other native plant growers is the best way to learn because there isn't very much written material on the subject. She reminded all to take very few seeds from one plant when collecting seeds. It is important to know flowering and blooming time and how to tell when seeds are ripe. There is a great deal of variation , but usually all good seeds are gone by winter. Many need to be cold stratified which involves putting seeds in a bag with perlite that has been moistened and then refrigerated. Also, air is needed in the bag. Other seeds, such as hollyhocks, only need to be put in the freezer. Most legumes need to be soaked overnight in hot tap water that is kept hot for 24 hours. Propagating plants from cuttings of soft wood involves cutting at a angle, burying at least two nodes, giving enough sun to continue photosynthesis and withholding nitrogen fertilzer until rooting takes place. Other pointers include selecting laterals rather than main stems and selecting young material rather than old for better results. Of course, don't take cuttings from dormant plants. Aspen was not able to cover propagation from cuttings of semi-hard wood and hard wood because she ran out of time. Another session with her will be scheduled.

Growing Desert Plants from Windowsill to Garden

by Theodore B. Hodoba
Red Crane Books, 1995, 212 pg., $25

Book Review by John Freyermuth

This desert gardening book is specifically designed for the Chihuahuan Desert. The author owns a native plant nursery in Veguita, New Mexico, and teaches a class at UNM on landscaping with desert plants. This work discusses many aspects of landscaping with desert plants, in addition to giving detailed instructions on their planting and care.

The introduction lists the advantages of using desert plants in landscaping and introduces the reader to the Chihuahuan Desert environment. A neatly designed map delineates the Chihuahuan Desert region. Roughly speaking, this landlocked desert runs east of the continental divide and extends from Albuquerque in the north to San Luis Potosi in the south, a distance of 1000 miles. The greatest breadth of this desert is approximately 500 miles, running along the southern boundary of New Mexico to a point in West Texas about 100 miles east of Big Bend National Park.

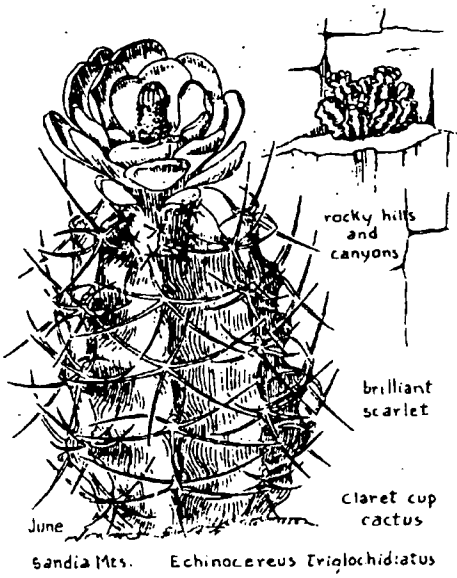
A chapter on designing a desert garden explains how to create zones of plants according to water requirements, soils, wind, temperature, size of plants, colors of flowers or foliage, and creating habitats for wildlife such as birds, reptiles and butterflies. There is a section detailing how to start a lawn of native grasses. This portion of the text is augmented with colorful photographs, landscape diagrams, lists of plants appropriate to different water zones, and a list of plants to attract wildlife.

Next is a section which explains various methods for collecting, storing, treating and germinating seeds of desert plants. The transplanting and care of seedlings is discussed along with other methods of plant propagation: cuttings, division, offsets.

Chapter 4, entitled Care of Desert Plants offers important information for establishing and maintaining desert plants in a garden setting. Topics dealt with include desert soils, planting, watering, mulching, pruning, diseases, and pest control. The author states, "Watering is the most difficult aspect of caring for plants in the desert." This statement is defended and clarified in the text with examples, instructions, charts and photographs. Special attention is devoted to the care of cacti and succulents.

Next is the interesting chapter, "Growing Desert Plants under Non-desert Conditions." Besides discussing how desert plants can be grown outdoors in non-desert areas such as Pennsylvania and Florida, methods are expounded upon for raising plants in greenhouses, on windowsills, and in containers. The chapter, "Pleasure Gardens," provides color photos for topics such as hummingbird gardens, the cactus garden, sand box gardens, and wildflower meadows. A "Wildflower Bloom Chart" is provided to assist the gardener in knowing when plants are likely to be in flower during the year.

The "Desert Plant Encyclopedia" comprises the last half of the book. Over 100 Chihuahuan Desert plants are profiled in sections: wildflowers, cacti, succulents, desert shrubs, and desert trees. Many fine pen and ink drawings accompany individual plant reports which feature descriptions; range, habitat, and hardiness; planting and care instructions; and remarks. Scientific names, common names, and plant family are listed here as well. Of special note is the section on cacti, in which 49 species and varieties are featured in addition to several related species or varieties. One might try using the cacti section as a field guide for New Mexico and appropriate areas of Trans-Pecos Texas.



Appendices list noteworthy locations in Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico where one can view Chihuahuan Desert Plants growing naturally or in cultivation, and names and addresses of mail-order sources for seeds and plants. A glossary of terms, a bibliography, and an index are also included.

Dry Climate Gardening With Succulents

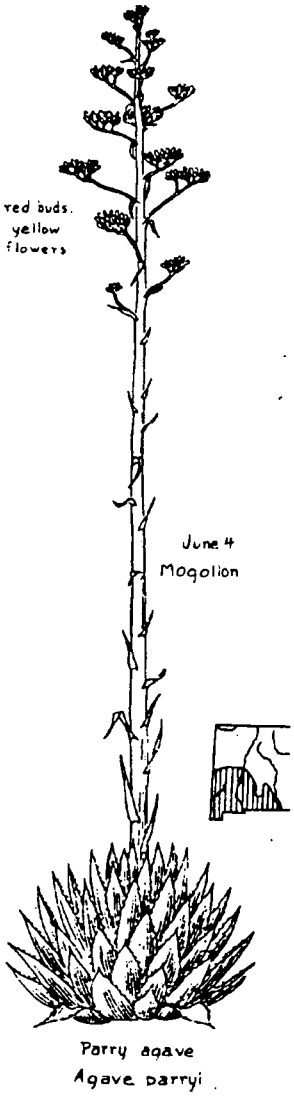
The Huntington Botanical Gardens
Pantheon Books, 1995, 224 pg. $25

Book Review by Tim McKimmie

This attractive work is part of the American Garden Guides series that produces gardening books in conjunction with many of the premier botanical gardens and arboreta. This particular volume was compiled by personnel at the Huntington Botanical Garden with assistance from several other botanical gardens throughout the southwest and California.

Succulents are adapted to dry climates and can go months without rain. The introduction describes their hardiness and the amazing ability of many succulents and cacti to root and establish following disturbance. "You will discover how ridiculousy easy they are to grow, how forgiving they are to people who travel ..."

The plants described in this book originate from around the world. Most of the species are hardy to 25 degrees F and some lower. The book describes approximately 200 succulents and cacti and has color photographs for most of the species. For example, there are more than 20 agave species pictured and more than 25 aloes. Arranged alphabetically by genus, plant descriptions include plant origin, use in the landscape, propagation, care, hardiness, and growth requirements. In addition to the described species, there are shorter descriptions of "cultivars and related species. Margin Notes present interesting facts such as historical uses and collection of succulents; botanical lessons; propagation notes; flowering facts; quotes from notable books; and using plants for home security.



Section two suggests companion plants. These provide contrast and some shade as well as softening and brightening the succulent garden. Nearly 100 possible companion trees, shrubs, herbaceous perennials and annuals, and grasses are listed with short descriptions and many photographs. Many are native to the southwest. Additionally, categories and species of plants NOT recommended are listed with reasons such as weediness, leaf drop, texture, form, and water use.

A section on garden design has important tips that may not be apparent to those used to gardening with native plants, such as discussion of massing plants, layering and spacing plants, repetition, and grouping. Here again, the photography is excellent.

A chapter on growing techniques includes soil and drainage requirements, planting, maintainence, and care. There is a good description of succulent propagation by division, cuttings, grafting, and seed. Even the nuances of transplanting large cacti are covered. Further discussion includes cold weather considerations, some common diseases and pests, and growing succulents indoors.

Many of the cacti depicted are native to the southwest. Most of the succulents on the other hand originate in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, many native plant enthusiasts will appreciate this work for its portrayal of the diversity of cacti and succulents available for cultivation and for the many ideas for their use in landscapes.

Contact information for 23 societies, publishers, and sources of plant material is included. The glossary will be helpful since some terms used to describe succulents may be unfamiliar to gardeners. Indexed by common and scientific name.

To The Editor:

Another member's opinion

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Ellery E. Worthen.My yard contains 25+ species of native plants carefully nurtured there. I am a bird feeder and birdwatcher. I am an amateur lepidopterist, mycologist and nature photographer. I also hunt and fish.

My objection to the introduction of the Mexican Gray Wolf is not the wolf itself, but the problems that environmentalist organizations will cause over the introduction, such as closing hunting in those areas where the wolf is introduced.

The Department of Game and Fish derives part of its revenues from hunting and fishing license fees. The bulk of the rest of the moneys comes from a 10 to 11% excise tax that is paid on guns and ammunition (Pittman-Robinson funds) and fishing equipment (Dingell-Johnson funds). These funds are paid by the hunters and fishermen for the benefit of game species.

I have a difficult time understanding how if habitat is preserved for game species that it does not also benefit non-game species. That fact is it does. Ducks Unlimited, a conservation organization made up mostly of hunters, has documented this. Eighteen threatened and endangered species, plus scores of non-game species, benefit from DU projects.

There are bills moving through Congress at this time that will add an excise tax to camping equipment, binoculars etc. that will allow non-hunters to participate the same way hunters do (although at 1/2 the rate hunters pay).Anyone interested in preserving habitat for non-game species should support these bills. The money generated could combine with game species money to come up with an all-encompassing wildlife management approach. This would allow the environmentalist community to put its money where its mouth is and leave the sportsmen's money alone.

Editors Note: Apparently the issue of wolf introduction arouses feelings in a lot of New Mexicans. Tom Wootten's article from last issue drew other letters to the editor as well. Readers and writers please note that your letters normally will not be printed in the ***Newsletter*** unless you indicate either in the letter, as the above writer has done, or in a separate note, that you wish your letter to be published. The expression of alternate viewpoints is encouraged.

Views from the South (One member's opinion)

by Tom Wootten

Native Plant Protection Abandoned or Who is Minding the Hen House

As members of an organization "dedicated to promoting a greater appreciation of native plants and their environment, and to the preservation of endangered species", please be aware that three unrelated (I think) developments have occurred over the last six months that have reduced protection of our native plants:

1) With very little notice and extremely short period for comment, New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division of Energy,Minerals and Natural Resources Department revised their regulations covering state endangered plant species. Now state listed species are protected only at the point of collection, i.e., don't get caught digging. There is no longer any prohibition of possessing, selling, or transporting the plant from the state. Because of the vast areas of land involved, this makes catching an offender virtually impossible. As well, protection of plants rare in New Mexico but not rare in other states are no longer eligible for listing, at least as I read the new rule. Finally the number of listed plants was greatly reduced. Included were a number of narrow endemic species, considered rare, but not in danger of collection, because of protection from other sources (Organ Mountain Evening Primrose was a candidate species under the Federal Endangered Species Act, so BLM will protect; *Escobaria Sandbergii* is found only on White Sands Missile Range, so the Feds will protect it).

2)The US Fish and Wildlife Service has recently changed their form of classification. Threatened and endangered status have not changed. Category 1 species (those where biology has shown the species should be listed) are now known as Candidate species. Category 2 species (those where concern about the viability of a species was indicated, but biological information to confirm the need for listing was incomplete) were transferred to a category called, "Species of Concern" but this list will not be published. (I am told that New Mexico's office of FWL will maintain a list for New Mexico, but it is unclear what affect this will have). The significance of this, lies in the fact that almost all management agencies, state and federal, except US Forest Service, have relied on the Federal ESA including Category 2 species, and state listings to indicate species for which special management might be needed. Organ Mountain Evening Primrose, as an example, no longer has either status.

3) Finally, New Mexico Department of Agriculture in late December changed the rules of plant collection. A collector need only pay for a license and display his license number on his vehicle. No longer is there a requirement that collected plants be tagged. No longer is there a requirement that written permission be given by the land owner prior to collection. No longer is there the opportunity to deny a collection permit because of a known pest infestation in the collection area. Enforcement of the old rule was extremely difficult and this is the reason given for making these changes. A group of local nurserymen and private citizens met with NMDA asking that the rule be strengthened but the result of the change is almost complete abandonment. I found one nurseryman who was called and asked to come to a meeting. One other nurseryman (previously charged with illegal collecting) was there. No other nurseryman that I can find was aware of the public hearing and the NM Nurseryman's Association was apparently not notified. Sure makes one wonder, or does it ? Ironically, this same NMDA was proposed in the 1995 legislature to take over responsibility for T & E plant protection. Wow. Homeowners, beware of peddlers selling native plants out of their pickups. You may be buying an infected plant. And,encourage your local nurseryman, whose plants will be inspected, to buy only from reputable collectors, who obtain plants legally. Please, let us all put our heads together and consider means to reverse this undesireable trend that threatens those that we are dedicated to protect.

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