

August 77

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

August ~~July~~ Newsletter

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July Field Trip

Irene Mitchell led a field trip to the top of the Pajarito Mountain Ski Area of Los Alamos on July 16. Just before a downpour occurred, the group found the purple mariposa, *calochortus gunnisonii*, at the top of the ski hill. This is one of our most striking wildflowers, with graceful form and intricate petal markings in a two-inch flower. Also seen on the way up and down the hill were the following natives:

Zigadenus elegans - Death camas

Delphinium sp. - Larkspur

Actaea rubra - Baneberry

Rosa sp. - Wild Rose

Physocarpus monogynus - Ninebark

Holodiscus dumosus - Rock spirea

Rubus parviflorus - Thimbleberry

Rubus idaeus - Wild Raspberry

Besseyia sp. - Kittentails

Descurania sophia - Tansy mustard

Aquilegia caerulea - Colorado columbine

Erysimum asperum - Wallflower

Campanula rotundifolia - Harebell

Epilobium angustifolium - Fireweed

Castilleja sp. - Indian paintbrush

Geranium richardsonii - Wild geranium

Erigeron sp. - Fleabane

Pedicularis grayi - Fernleaf lousewort

Clematis pseudoalpina - Subalpine clematis

Potentilla sp. - Cinquefoil

Artemisia sp. - Wormwood

Gentiana amarella - Rose gentian

Frasera speciosa - Green gentian

Pachystima myrsinites - Mountain lover

Osmorhiza depauperata - Sweet cicely

Pseudocymopterus montanus - Mountain parsley

Heuchera parvifolia - Alumroot

Corydalis aurea - Golden smoke

Allium cernuum - Nodding onion

August Meeting

Warren Wagner, botanist, will speak of his work on the vascular plant flora of the Animas Mountains. Meeting will be Wednesday evening, August 17, at 7:30.

Meeting place: Grassland Resources Co. Bldg., just behind The State Distributing Co. - Santa Fe Railroad yard just off of Guadalupe Street.

A fine speakers program is lining up for Fall. At the September meeting we will have Don Lowrie of Santa Fe speaking on "Insects as pollinators and plant feeders and plants as insect eaters."

Irene Mitchell, who is arranging for Fall speakers, advises that the Schooleys of Las Vegas, NM are scheduled for October and that George Kelly will speak at the November meeting.

Dr. Bruce MacBryde of the Interior Department's Office of Endangered Species has sent us the "General Provisions, General Permit Proceedings and Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants" publication..... the rules and regulations governing endangered and threatened plants, printed in the Federal Register on June 24, 1977. This document is in the Society's library and may be borrowed by calling Melissa Savage at 983-1113.

Dr. MacBryde also informs us that there will be a workshop on permits for regulations for endangered species on August 16th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Albuquerque Convention Center. The morning meeting will be concerned with Endangered Species Act and application forms and the afternoon session with additional aspects of the E. S. Act.

For more information call Albuquerque 766-3974, and a call to this number for space reservations for the convention would be greatly appreciated.

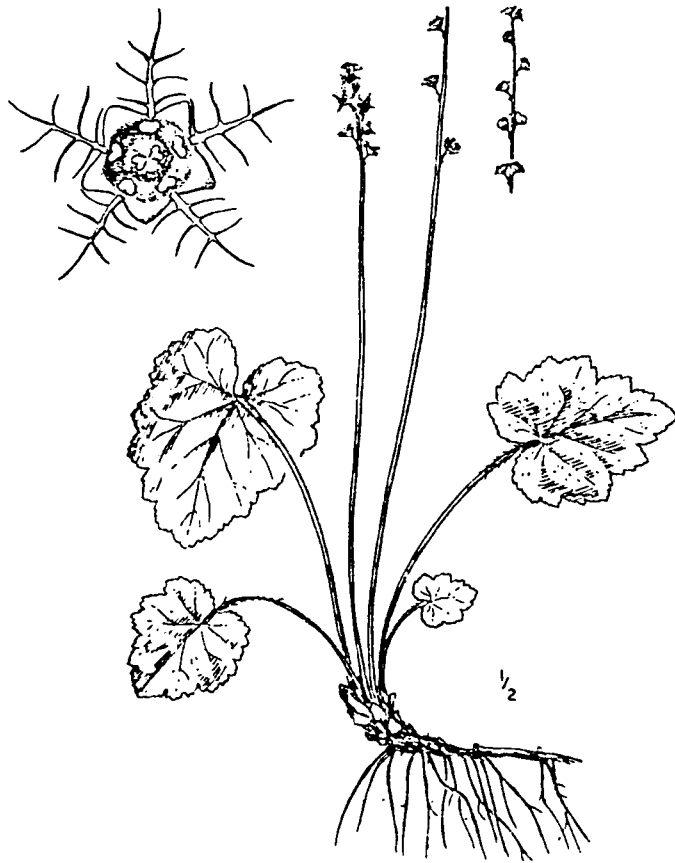
NOTES

Apologies from N. P. S. for inadvertently omitting the name of Doris Hallow. Box 85-B, Route 3, Santa Fe, from our June Newsletter list of members in goodstanding.

A number of copies of "Native Plants for Landscaping in Northern New Mexico," put out by the Native Plant Society of N. M. are available at 50¢ per copy. Order from Gail Haggard, Ph. 988-2023.

Claudia Hubbard would welcome volunteer help each month for calling up to ten N. P. S. members prior to each forthcoming meeting.

Mitella pentandra
Illustration by Jeanne R. Janish from
"Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest"



Mitella pentandra Hooker - Bishop's Cap Saxifragaceae

Description: Weakly stoloniferous plant, scapes about 20 dm. tall, bracteate or with one or two reduced sessile leaves, surface glandular pubescent; leaf blades more or less ovate-cordate, 2-4 cm., longer than broad, finely hirsute, especially on lower surface, shallowly 4 to 6 lobed, doubly crenate-dentate; flowers racemose, flowering from base upward, pedicels 2-3 mm long, calyx saucer-shaped, then cup-shaped when in fruit, about 4 mm broad, lobes triangular and spreading; petals yellowish green, about 3 mm long, pectinately divided into 6-8 lateral segments; stamens 5, opposite the petals; ovary inferior, style obscure, stigma seemingly sessile. In moist, loamy soil amongst rock on east bank of Rio San Leonardo, boundary of Pecos Wilderness, Rio Arriba County, N.M., Truchas Peak area. About 5 or 6 individual plants observed. Known to date only from western Colorado and north in the Rocky Mountains. Coll. Isaacs, et. al. 7-10-77.

This lovely, delicate perennial herb is very similar to Heuchera, the alum root and if not in flower might not be readily seperable from species of that genus. *Mitella pentandra* is a common species in western Colorado and north in the Rocky Mountains, as well as along the Pacific Coast. Its appearance in our New Mexico flora should not be considered suprising, but it has not been reported previously in our state. Wooten and Standley do not mention its occurrence here and Dr. William Martin had not included it in his forthcoming New Mexico Flora (pers. comm.).

A Grass Portrait

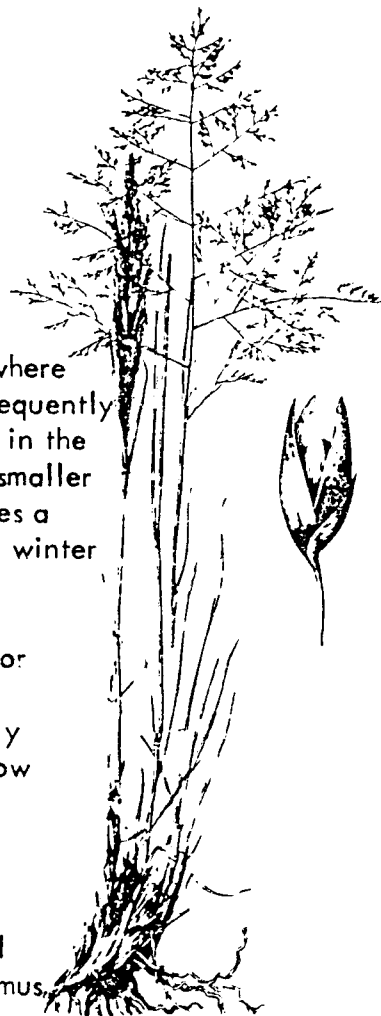
Common Name: Alkali sacaton

Generic Name: *Sporobolus Airoides*. Torr.

In the native habitat, this is a clump grass, growing in areas where water concentrates and appears to tolerate alkali soil but is frequently seen growing in rich mountain soils, attaining the greater size in the better soil. It reaches 1 to 5 feet in height and width. The smaller the clump the growth habit is straight up and the larger becomes a beautiful airy brown cloud of a mound lasting well through the winter snows.

This plant harmonizes beautifully against stucco, native stone or rough wood walls and fences. Sacaton is very soft, airy, fine textured, flowing gracefully in the breezes. It is exceptionally beautiful along side garden features such as Santos or in with low plantings when it is desired to break up the lines.

Pruning is required in the early spring to rid the dead stubble. Seed can be used as can a clump from the wild, providing all the roots and soil can be taken and watered in quickly. It will respond readily to extra water and fertilizers or manure and humus.



Tom Ray Riddle

Alkali sacaton

Shrubs with particular value for wildlife

Native unless otherwise noted

Sand Cherry (*Prunus besseyi*) Superb hardiness. Small white flowers and half inch fruit, both edible and attractive to native birds.

Western Chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana demissa*) Large attractive shrub with small clusters of white flowers in May or June. Fruit black and very popular with wildlife, particularly birds. Drought-resistant. Likes sunny or partly shady location.

Golden Currant (*Ribes aureum*) Fragrant tube-shaped flowers, yellow with yellow or black berry birds love. 3½ foot high shrub, drought-resistant. Best in full sun.

Western Gooseberry (*Ribes inerme*) Graceful arching stems heavily armed with sharp spines. Greenish or pinkish flowers. Tart black berries for birds. Good screen or barrier. 3 to 5 feet tall.

Wild Rose (*Rosa* sp.) Fragrant white or pink flowers in June. Red hips for birds (and jam). Spiny, making a good barrier. 2 to 4 feet high.

Thimbleberry (*Rubus deliciosus*) Large white rose-like flowers in late May. Graceful arching spineless branches. Favorite with birds. Excellent specimen shrub. 3 to 5 high. Best in partial shade.

Oregongrape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) Shiny, holly-like leaves, which are purplish over winter. Bright yellow flowers. Berry a favorite with birds. Makes a good hedge, can be clipped. Must be protected from wind. 4 to 6 feet high.

Kinnikinnick or Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) Broadleaf evergreen vine with small leathery leaves and small fragrant white or pink bell-shaped flowers. Green berry that turns red over winter. Used extensively for medicinal purposes. Barries favorite with birds. Likes well-drained sandy, slightly acidic soil. Makes a good ground cover--mat of 3 to 6 inches. Will grow in dry locations and does best in some shade.

Silver buffaloberry (*Shepherdia argentea*) Narrow grey foliage similar to Russian olive. Bright red edible berries.

Ornamental fruits attractive to birds:

Preferred

Soft fruits eaten when ripe by such birds as Robins, Finches, Bluebirds, Solitaires and Grosbeaks.

Mulberries Elderberries
Pie Cherries Manchu Cherries
Pin Cherries Raspberries
Black Cherries Wild grape
Chokecherries

Eaten later as a second choice

Buffaloberries Mountain Ash
Currants Sand Cherries
Crabapples Wild Plums
Gooseberries

Dry fruit important for sparrows, finches, & grosbeaks:

Preferred

Dry or persistent fruits eaten in winter or spring by such birds as Waxwings, Robins, Flickers, Starlings
Russian Olive
Englemann Ivies
Nannyberries

Also eaten as second choice

Dogwoods Euonymus
Privets Hawthorns
Rosehips Highbush Cranberries
Barberries Sumacs
Coralberries Junipers
Snow berries Hackberries

Ash, Boxelders.



Golden Currant- *Ribes aureum*