

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

july/august 1980 newsletter

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 26-28: Symposium on Endangered Plants, Ashland, Oregon.
- August 16: First Annual Statewide Meeting of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, Fourth of July Canyon on the east side of the Manzanos, 10:30 a.m. Albuquerque Chapter to host the event. Field trip with Bill Isaacs followed by mid-day potluck meal. Directions from Santa Fe:
- 1) Take I 25 east to Lamy turnoff.
 - 2) Take Hwy 285 to Galisteo turnoff (8 miles).
 - 3) Take Hwy 41 to Estancia (53 miles).
 - 4) Take Hwy 55 to Tajique (13 miles).
 - 5) Proceed through Tajique due west on forest road 55 for approximately 6 miles to the camp ground.
- August 20: Regularly scheduled meeting of the Santa Fe Chapter will not be held; members are urged to attend statewide meeting August 16th.
- September 6-7: Annual flower and garden show sponsored by the Santa Fe Council of Garden Clubs, De Vargas Shopping Center, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Horticultural classes eligible for awards include: a) annuals, b) perennials, c) vines, biennials, hardy annuals and tender perennials, d) bulbs, corms, rhizomes and tubers, e) dahlias, f) seeds, pods, foliage, decoratives, fruits and vegetables, g) trees and shrubs, h) container-grown plants and i) roses. Judging will begin 12:00 noon, September 6th.
- September 17: Santa Fe Chapter Meeting. Larry Caudill, Staff Environmentalist for the City of Albuquerque, will describe ecological factors in the selection of native plants for landscaping including water harvesting and water conservation techniques, mulching materials and tensiometers. Slides and lecture; St. John's College, Lab 118, 7:30 p.m.
- September 20: Native Plant Landscaping Workshop conducted by Aqua Fria Nursery and Plants of the Southwest. Meet 9:30 a.m. at Agua Fria Nursery. Field trip around Santa Fe to look at examples of landscaping with native plants. Exposure and microenvironment affecting selection of plants for problem-solving approach.
- October 15: Santa Fe Chapter Meeting. Michael Moore will return to show us the rest of his slides on native plants used for medicinal purposes. Room 118 of the Laboratory Building, St. John's College, 7:30 p.m.
- November 19: Santa Fe Chapter Meeting. Phyllis Hughes, botanical illustrator and archeologist, will describe how the Indians have used native plants for crafts, dyes, food and ceremonial functions. Lab 118, St. John's College, 7:30 p.m.

THE HERITAGE PROGRAM

The Heritage Program is a network of 27 State programs inventorying natural resources, spearheaded by The Nature Conservancy. In New Mexico the State Heritage Program is a section of the Natural Resources Department which is located in the Villagra Building in Santa Fe.

The Heritage methodology is comparable from state to state. Elements of diversity define the basis of the classification system. Each element is a particular rare or unique feature or species. The computer data base is made up of specific occurrences of elements. Rare plant species are monitored and each occurrence of that species is mapped on a quadrangle map utilizing latitude and longitude coordinates. The element occurrence record also contains information about land ownership, source of the record, date, township and range location, county, collector or observer, etc. Under this system, a search for data can be done by computer, such as: "Give us all occurrences of endangered species of plants in Catron Co. on BLM land collected after 1930."

The situation in regard to rare plants in New Mexico is complex. Only five taxa are presently protected. The Heritage Program estimates there are over 300 species of plants in New Mexico that are rare. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service was forced to remove most of the proposed T&E plant species from the Federal Register list due to pressure from Congress. However, more recently they are developing a new list of proposed species for review. Species now being considered by the Albuquerque Regional Office of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service include: Thelepodium vernale (now shown by R. Rollins to be Thelepodopsis purpusii), Penstemon alamosensis, Sclerocactus whipplei var. heilii, Perityle cernua and Silene wrightii.

New Mexico has a very diverse flora and many new state records are continually being added. Some 600 additional taxa have been discovered since Dr. Martin's Flora was sent to the publisher. Among these is a new species of Pediocactus, P. terrae canyonae, a close relative of the endangered P. knowltonii.

What is the Heritage Program doing about rare plants?

1) Developing an Endangered Plant Handbook, which will be available the end of 1980. This will be a working list for land planners, including recommendations as to management. More than 300 species are described and there will be numerous line drawing illustrations done by Niki Threlkeld. Financial assistance for the publication of this handbook has come from Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, U. S. Forest Service, the BLM, the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, U. S. Corps of Army Engineers, Soil Conservation Service, New Mexico State University and private donors.

2) Negotiating with the New Mexico Department of Agriculture to expand the Plant Protection Act, which currently addresses rare plants but protects them only along the highway right-of-way.

3) Developing a plant propagation program for rare and endangered plants. The Heritage Program plans to fund research to the Plant Research Institute in Salt Lake City in the cloning of rare cacti by tissue culture. Since too much manpower is required to enforce plant protection laws, the new approach is to make rare plants available at such a price as to make it uneconomical to dig them in the wild.

4) The New Mexico Endangered Plant Committee is exploring the feasibility of legislative protection for threatened and endangered plants in New Mexico.

CHAPTER NEWS

A new chapter in the Alamogordo/Tularosa area is being organized under the leadership of Bill Mayfield. For further information contact Bill at 671-4617.

NEWS & NOTES

William Martin's A Flora of New Mexico is to be published this summer in two volumes covering 941 genera and 3,700 taxa. 3,000 pages, 1,300 maps and some line drawings are included. The Native Plant Society of New Mexico will place your order at a 20 percent wholesaler's discount (plus postage) by contacting Carol Dimeff, Rt. 4, Puesta del Sol, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501 (471-8158) before September 1st.

NATIVE PLANTS FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES

A few examples of the diverse uses of native New Mexico plants for medicinal purposes include:

Osha (Ligusticum porteri) Umbellifereae
One of the best treatments for viral infections, especially if used at the first signs of illness. Brings on thorough sweating and elimination of toxins. For sore throats and bronchial inflammations, the root in any form will soothe and anesthetize almost immediately. Unless you absolutely know what you're doing, it's better to buy this one through your local herbalist because the plant is easily mistaken for poison hemlock.

Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) Compositae
One tablespoon of the chopped plant steeped in tea is an effective stomach tonic. Yarrow contains the alkaloid achilleine which stimulates blood clotting of cuts or wounds. Cultivation: Wild yarrow is easy to grow from seed or can be transplanted from roots with basal leaves dug early in the spring.

Yuccas (Yucca spp.) Liliaceae
The root contains phytosterols used as a sudsing agent for making soap or shampoo (hence the name Soaptree Yucca). 1/2 to 1 cup of the chopped fresh or dried root is boiled in 1-1/2 cups of water until suds form. The dried root can also be used in tea as a home remedy for arthritis and has some value for urethral and prostrate inflammations.

Mullein (Verbascum thapsus) Scrophulariaceae
Mullein is mainly an herb for the lungs and throat. The leaves, either smoked or in a tea, can be used as a mild sedative for relaxing bronchial spasms and asthmas, or in combination with Lobelia or Jimson weed for greater effect. A useful earache oil can be made from equal volumes of the fresh flowers and olive oil; and the root is also a diuretic and urinary tract astringent.

Mormon Tea (Ephedra spp.) Gnetaceae
The branches of this plant are dried and made into a tea for stomach and bowel disorders. Not as physiologically active as Ephedra species found in the Orient, but the decongestant effects of Mormon Tea make it functional for home use. The tea has a pronounced diuretic effect as well.

Canagire (Rumex hymenosepalus) Polygonaceae
The root is prized as a tanning agent but may also be used as an astringent and hemostatic wash for cuts or scrapes, or a mouthwash and gargle for ulcerations of the gums and mucosa, wherever astringency is needed. The leaves have been used as a substitute for rhubarb, which is why the plant is sometimes called Pie Plant or Wild Rhubarb.

Curly Dock (Rumex crispus) Polygonaceae
The root is gathered in late summer and fall, after the flowering parts have turned a deep red, pounded and mixed with water to make a poultice for swellings, cuts and sore muscles.



Clematis or Virgin's Bower
(Clematis spp.)
Ranunculaceae

A tablespoon of the dried plant in tea is a useful treatment for migraine headaches.

No References

MEMBERSHIP

In revising our Membership Roster it was determined that the Native Plant Society of New Mexico has 176 members now, including a few societies with which we exchange newsletters. This represents a 33% increase in membership since the Roster was first prepared in November of 1978, when we had 132 members. Your NPS is growing!

New members joining after September 1980 will automatically be registered for the 1981 calendar year as well. For a membership application, write to: Dorothy DeWitt, 1414 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

Classified Ads

BEAR MOUNTAIN GUEST RANCH
Guided wildflower tours
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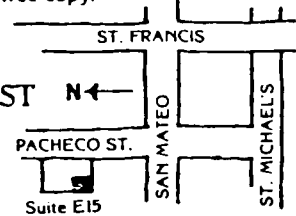
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wildflower seeds of the Southwest. Lovely
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Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502

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Hymenoxys grandiflora
Old Man of the Mountain
(alpine tundra plant)