

Newsletter

Native Plant Society of New Mexico



May/June, 1985

Volume X, No. 3

Calendar

- May-- Albuquerque Chapter will host Susan Wachter who will speak on Landscaping with Native Plants.
- May 4 Santa Fe Chapter will again be holding a plant sale in front of the Museum of International Folk Art for the Native Plant Display Garden. Among the treasures you will be able to purchase will be Verbena, Gaillardia, Coneflower, Blue and White Flax, Artemesia, Harebell, herbs, tomatoes, ground covers, houseplants, annuals and perennials of all sorts. Come see our garden and support it! Help is always welcome, too. Anyone who can take care of a dozen or more potted plants and get them to the museum by 9:30 the morning of the sale please call Ellen Wilde 982-1406. If you have plants you can contribute, I would like to know ahead of time so that I can mention them in publicity and make signs for them. Would you like to be a salesperson at the sale? Please call and offer your help!
- May 5 Las Cruces Chapter will have a field trip to Hueco Tanks. Meet at the Pan Am Center parking lot, NMSU at 7:00 a.m. Bring water, snack or lunch, and wear comfortable walking shoes.
- May 8 Las Cruces Chapter will meet in the Ag Bldg. NMSU at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Dave Richman will give a program on Mountains of the Southwest.
- May 11 Otero/Lincoln Chapter will have a plant sale from 9:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m. at the Garden Center, 10th and Oregon. Many plants have already been potted and we have been receiving good publicity from the Extension Service since Tom Wootten gave a talk to them on Landscaping with Natives.

- May 15 Santa Fe Chapter will celebrate its last regular meeting of the season with an informal potluck supper at 5:30 p.m. in the Lab Bldg., St. John's College.
- May 16 Chaves County Chapter meets at RAC, Roswell to hear Howard Roth, local photographer, who will instruct the audience on photographing wildflowers.
- May 19 Chaves County Chapter members will meet at the RAC parking lot at 1:00 p.m. for a local field trip led by Howard Roth who will demonstrate his techniques for photographing blooming native plants. Be on the lookout for favorable spots to visit.
- May 25 Otero/Lincoln Chapter plans a weekend trip to the
-26 Guadalupe Mountains, led by Paul Gordon and Frank Hayes. Meet at the confluence of Sitting Bull Falls and Last Chance Canyon at 1:00 p.m., Saturday the 25th. We hope people from other chapters as well as bird watchers will join us. There are no facilities there.
- June-- Albuquerque Chapter's program to be announced.
- June 9 Las Cruces Chapter plans a field trip to San Andres Wildlife Refuge or Dripping Springs. Meet at the Pan Am Center parking lot, NMSU, at 8:00 a.m. Bring water, lunch and walking shoes.
- June 12 Las Cruces Chapter meets in the Ag Bldg. NMSU at 7:30 for a program by Helen Sprecher on the identification and pressing of plants.
- June 23 Chaves County Chapter plans a field trip to Bitter Lakes Refuge. Meet at the RAC parking lot at 1:00 p.m.
- June 30 Otero/Lincoln Chapter will have a field trip to Three Rivers at the edge of Lincoln National Forest. Meet at the highway turnoff to Three Rivers at 2:00 p.m.

WELCOME TO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



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President's Message

One of the purposes of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico is educating the public in the uses of native plants in landscaping. It seems like a slow process at times especially when we see some of the newer developments in our growing urban areas. It makes me sick when I see the developers scrape the earth bare and then sell the unsuspecting buyer a yard with blue grass sod laid on top with a few trees and shrubs of imported origin. It's going to take a lot of water and chemicals just to keep them alive. It makes me even angrier to see commercial

properties planted with a ridiculous strip of non-native grass running between the sidewalk and street for example. No one will ever sit in that grass, no one will really enjoy or use it.

It's up to us as members of the Society to landscape our yards with natives in an attractive manner as examples of what can be done. By starting with our own yards perhaps others will follow suit. Maybe one day new houses will be landscaped with more awareness for our New Mexico environment.

Ted Hodoba

From The Editor(s)

Failure to identify Tom Smylie, author of Fish and Wildlife Service In March/April issue as the Service's Public Affairs Officer in Albuquerque, was inadvertent, meaning that nobody volunteers to take the blame for the omission.

This article was the first of a planned series of "Who's Minding the Store?" articles by and about Federal and State agencies with custody and administration of public lands.

The article about scope and functions of BLM in this issue is by Guadalupe G. Martinez, Public Information Specialist with the Roswell office. Comments by Jesse Juen about importance of preserving species is, of course, not presented as news to NPS members but as a good explanation when next you're made speechless by that old query, "Why get concerned about those old weeds?"

Identification of contributors well known to readers is not usually made. Do you approve of this and other current Newsletter tendencies? Give vent to your feelings. Fire off a letter to the editors. Indicate if it may be published, with all greetings and personal chit-chat enjoyed but deleted.

George Finley

And now from the other half:

Many thanks to this issue's terrific contributors, including the Chapter reporters. It took a lot of cramming and shoving to get everything in in this issue, but we felt that it was all important information.

We have included House Bill 347, sponsored by Representative Vernon Kerr of Los Alamos. It was signed into law by the governor recently and will go into effect in June.

Many of our native endangered plants are being dug and sold to buyers in many places, even abroad. HB347 tracks with the Federal program on endangered plants. Reason for the bill was the need to join with the federal government for law enforcement so the trafficking in native endangered plants could be handled.

When contacted, Kerr told the Newsletter that he felt the bill would certainly provide a service to the people of New Mexico, as well all the people in USA, for the preservation of endangered species. He said some of our endangered species are so rare that they have no common names. He stated that the bill will not interfere with ranching or land development interests.

Myrtle

Chapter Reports

Albuquerque Chapter: Our March program included discussions of plans for the annual spring plant sale at the Albuquerque Garden Center to be held on April 27. A slide program, presented by former Master Gardener Tom Wagers, concerned his trip to the Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum, near Superior, Arizona; and slides from last year's Native Plant Society's state meeting in Las Vegas.

The April meeting was canceled so that members could attend a workshop on "Landscaping with Natives", at the Rio Rancho City Auditorium. The panel of experts included Robert Cox, the Sandoval County Extension Agent; Lisa Johnston of the Plant Materials Center; and Elaine Culver, the Rio Arriba County Home Extension Agent. There were several slide presentations and an extensive question/answer session.

Suzy Sultemeier

Chaves County Chapter: At our March meeting a sprightly lesson on transplanting wild plants was presented by George Finley. He was extremely thorough and held all spellbound with little humorous remarks as he proceeded. Highlights of his lesson were

1. Young plants are the easiest to move.
2. Use plenty of water to soak site before digging plant and keep site well soaked for a few days, often more.
3. Use two narrow trowels to dig. Have plastic bag, moistened inside to conserve plant's own moisture, ready to put plant in. Fasten bag closed immediately.
4. Temperature is important as there will be little or no growth until temperature reaches 40 to 45 degrees.
5. Don't "coddle" plant more than two weeks if you want it to learn to survive in your environment.

Kay Ewart

Las Cruces Chapter: We had our first 1985 meeting on February 13 with a very informative and enjoyable narrative and slide show by Bob Reeves about cacti, their nomenclature and characteristics.

On March 10 we traveled to the vicinity of Bishop's Cap. Most plants were in bud, but in bloom were bladderpod, Lesquerella; twist flower, Streptenthus; spectaclepod, Dithyrea; evening primrose, Oenothera and Anemone. The claret cup hedgehog and feathery pea bush were just ready to bloom. This field trip was very well attended, approximately 30, which told us we are all ready for spring.

The Mexican poppies have started to bloom and our planned field trip to the Dona Ana Mountains should be full of spectacular scenes.

We have been doing initial planning needed for hosting the August 10 state meeting. Las Cruces issues a big welcome to all. Early August is hard to predict in Las Cruces from a wildflower standpoint because we are so dependent on summer rains to really make the desert bloom. The temperature will be high, no doubt, but we assure you that your visit will be enjoyable. When plans are more concrete we will get the word out.

Tom Wootten

Otero/Lincoln Chapter: In March Herb Hammond gave us a slide show illustrating the change in plant life from the Tularosa Basin to the alpine tundra. Some of the slides were highly magnified to show details that many of us had not seen before. We hope Herb will join our field trips later in the season to help identify plants.

We had a glorious day to walk around the new Desert Hills City Park which is now fenced, the trash cleaned out and groundwork laid for a ramp for the

(Continued on last page)

On Germination and Culture of Aquilegia

by Jim Borland

As an adjunct to Ted Hodoba's article For Shade Only in the March/April issue, it might be interesting to relate work on the germination and culture of Aquilegia caerulea done by Dr. Jesse Fults, Delta, Colorado.

Dr. Fults, responsible for Fults' Alkalai Grass which is used extensively as a turf component for difficult salty soils, has been interested in a number of native plants. Several years ago he determined that uniform germination of Aquilegia caerulea seed could be accomplished by first subjecting the seed to three weeks of moist-cold (stratification) conditions. Seed then subjected to 65 to 70 degrees F temperatures can be expected to germinate in three weeks.

This procedure has worked well on a large number of species propagated at Denver Botanic Gardens. It may also be useful to note that "green" or "just-about-ripe" seed of this species and A. saximontana will promptly germinate without pretreatment

Jesse also determined that only seven weeks of 34 to 41 degree F temperatures while subjected to continuous fluorescent light was necessary

for complete vernalization. It is still to be determined just how mature a plant or seedling must be before this treatment will work. Plants from spring sown seed and then subjected to this treatment in the fall have successfully bloomed during the subsequent winter. Also to be determined is the intensity and duration of lighting per day necessary for this treatment.

As this is being written (April 4), Aquilegia jonesii is blooming in our Rock and Alpine Garden. And that reminds me that results from a cross between A. caerulea and A. saximontana should be blooming soon in our greenhouse. The result of this cross may be a new native introduction into the commercial greenhouse industry worldwide. If so, it would follow in the footsteps of another native, variously rare or endangered depending on the state, -- Eustoma grandiflora.

This report would not be complete unless note were also made of another interesting cross between A. jonesii and A. saximontana. Although germination is barely complete the combination of the diminutive characters of these two species is exciting.

Is anyone interested in carpooling up to the Denver Botanic Garden in mid-June? Their collection of penstemons is quite large and should be at peak bloom about that time. In addition, there is a rock alpine garden, also many displays of landscape ideas, collections of all sorts, indoor and out; 20 acres in all, and it is very well maintained. Call Ellen Wilde, 982-1406, Santa Fe, if interested.

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Bureau of Land Management

by Guadalupe Martinez

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), United States Department of the Interior, is the agency charged with the protection and management of the public lands and public mineral resources. These lands are managed under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield for the benefit of all Americans.

BLM New Mexico manages 13 million surface acres and 25 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate in a tri-state area of New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. The headquarters are located in Santa Fe and there are district offices in Roswell, Las Cruces, Albuquerque and Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Programs managed within public lands by BLM New Mexico include lands--realty, minerals, range, cultural resources, watershed, recreation, wildlife habitat, trespass, environmental protection and fire control. The BLM as a whole has many major legislative acts affecting the implementation and management of such programs on public lands.

One such act, Rare and Endangered Species Act of 1973, establishes a listing of and procedures for protecting specific rare and/or endangered species of plants, fish, animals and birds.

The following text on threatened and endangered plants in southeast New Mexico was written by Jesse Juen, Wildlife Biologist in the Carlsbad Resource Area of the BLM's Roswell district. Editing was done by Hans Stewart who was formerly with the Roswell District and is now with the BLM in Denver, Colorado.

From its people and cultures to its terrain and plant life, New Mexico is a land of great diversity. More than 2000 of the State's 3700 plant species are found in the southeast corner. The plains, basins and mountains found in this part of New Mexico make up

a floral 'melting pot' of the Chihuahuan Desert and Great Plains influences.

Traveling from Carlsbad to the Guadalupe Mountains, you will pass through six distinct life zones. First you'll see mesquite, creosote and tobosa grass, which are found in the Chihuahuan Desert Scrub zone. Next are a variety of range grasses in the Plains and Great Basin Grasslands. As you gain altitude you'll notice more bush plants, including scrub oak, in the Interior Chaparral zone. In cooler and more moist areas, such as canyons and north-facing slopes is the Madrean Evergreen Woodland, characterized by pinon, juniper, oaks and maples, and mescal plants.

Once in the Guadalupe you'll enter the Great Basin Conifer Woodland, with pinon, juniper and ponderosa pines interspersed in a sea of grasses. Your last stop will be in spruce and fir trees in the Petran Montane zone.

In this profusion of life zones, plant life abounds. Some plants, however, are quite rare--and are restricted to small specific areas. Five plant species in southeast New Mexico have been officially listed by the Federal Government as Endangered or Threatened. The Endangered designation is the most critical--it recognizes a species as being in imminent danger of becoming extinct. The Threatened category recognizes a species which may become endangered without protection.

The five Federally listed plants are:

Gypsum Wild Buckwheat (Eriogonum gypsophilum, Threatened) occurs in semiarid areas in nearly pure gypsum soils in the Chihuahuan Desert Scrub zone. Reaching 12 inches in height in the flowering stage, the plants have several bright yellow flowers that bloom from May to August.

McKittrick Pennyroyal (Hedeoma apiculatum, Threatened) is found in limestone outcrops in moist canyons in the Madrean Evergreen Woodland and Great Basin Conifer Woodland zones. The plant exists in a mat only a couple of inches high but has a large, extensive root system that exudes a toxin to prevent other plants from growing in the mat. Its lavender flowers bloom from July until October.

Kuenzler Hedgehog Cactus (Echinocereus fendleri var. kuenzleri, Endangered) is four to eight inches in height and has a large, bright pink flower that blooms for a short period in June. It is found in pinon--juniper hills on shallow limestone soil in the Great Basin Conifer Woodland zone. One reason for its endangered status is overcollecting.

Lee and Sneed's Pincushion Cactus (Coryphantha sneedii var. leei, Threatened, and var. sneedii, Endangered) are found in shallow limestone soils in desert hills of the Chihuahuan Desert Scrub zone. The plants look very much alike, but Lee's pincushion cactus is found on north facing slopes, where Sneed's is found on the hotter, drier south facing slopes. Both plants grow in clumps one to two inches high; only the larger globes flower in May or June. These plants are also threatened by overcollection.

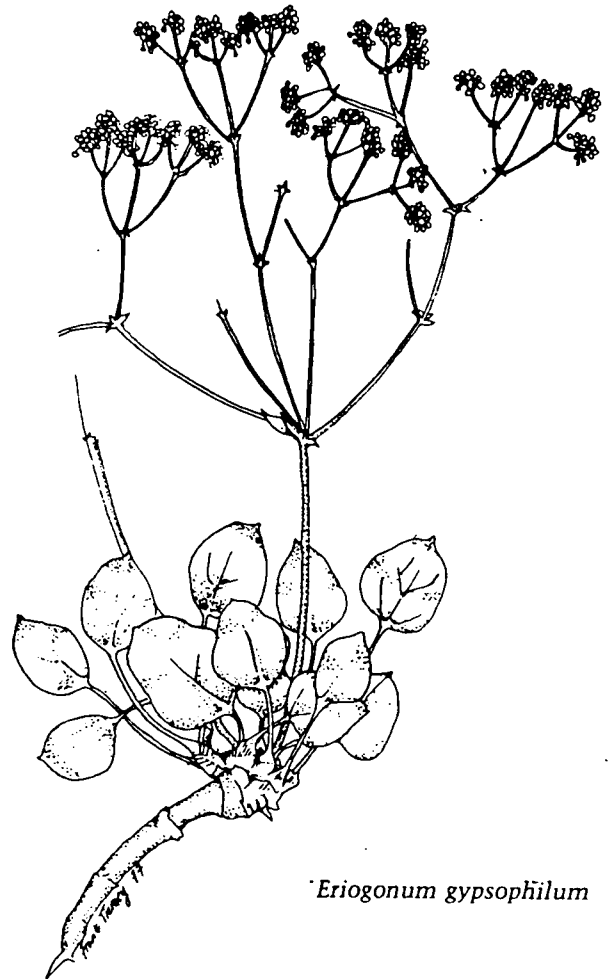
One may ask, "Why protect rare plants?" The answers are many. Right now we simply don't know what we may be losing. Perhaps the toxin exuded from the rootstock of the McKittrick Pennyroyal could have medical uses. After all, it was "only" a mold that gave us penicillin, and other plants have yielded substances used in drugs to treat heart disease and cancer.

--- Many seemingly insignificant forms of life are beginning to show important benefits in agriculture. Texas wild rice, an endangered relative of Indian wild rice, is being studied by researchers seeking to improve disease

resistance and increase the protein in domesticated rice.

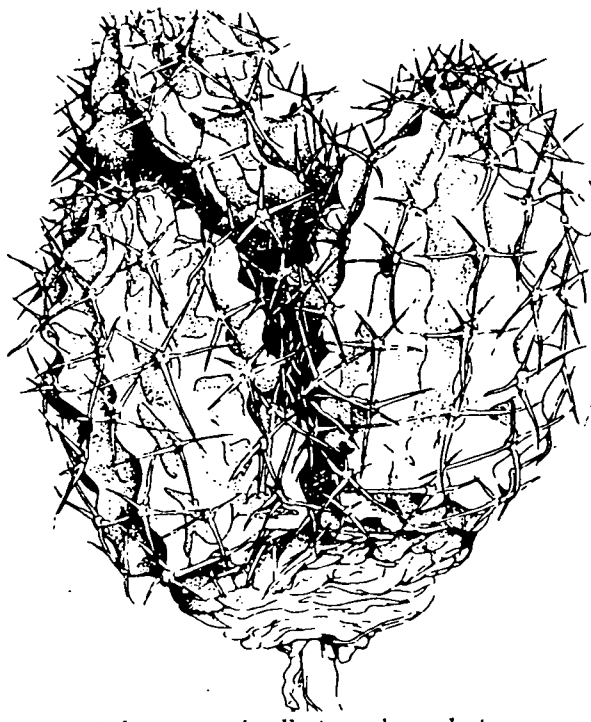
No creature exists in a vacuum. All living things are part of a complex delicately balanced network. The removal of a single species can set off a chain reaction affecting many others. It has been estimated, for example, that a disappearing plant can take with it up to 30 other species, including insects and higher animals.

All of us share in the stewardship of our lands. Perhaps we should start looking at our natural resources not as something passed on to us from our ancestors, but rather as an inheritance we are holding for our children.

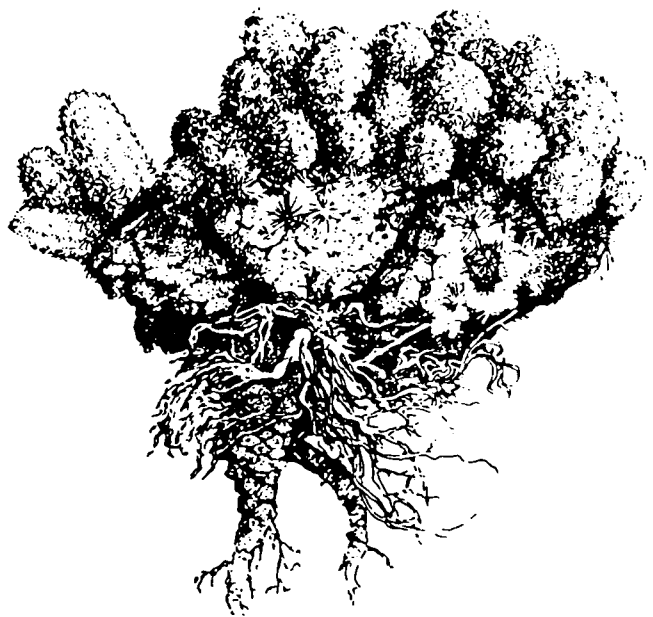


Eriogonum gypsophilum

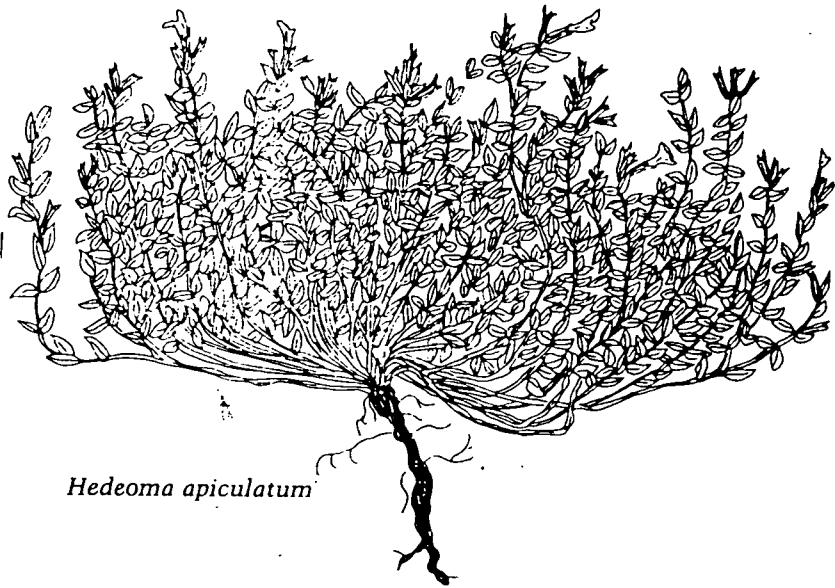
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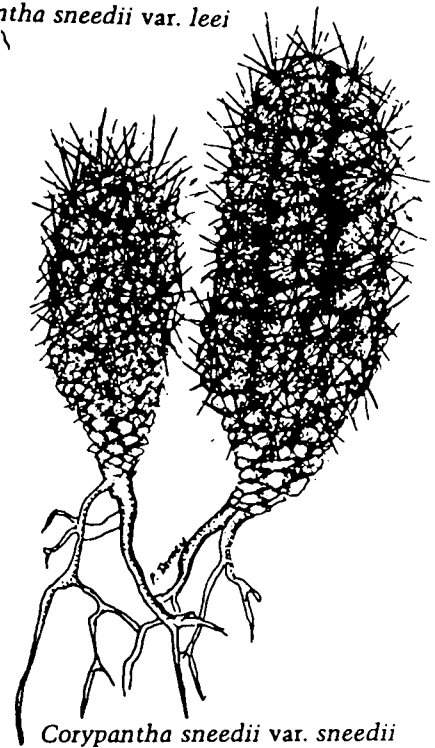
Echinocerus fendleri var. *kuenzleri*



Corypantha sneedii var. *leei*



Hedeoma apiculatum



Corypantha sneedii var. *sneedii*

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Native seeds/SEARCH, a non-profit organization promoting useful plant diversity, needs interns for three to four week intensive work-study in Arizona (possibly for college credit). Interns work on propagation of desert adapted crops and their wild ancestors (emphasis is on food crops), seed collection and storage and research documentation. Interested persons may contact Karen Reichardt, Native Seeds/SEARCH, 3950 W. New York Drive, Tucson AZ 85745.

House Bill 347

RELATING TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT; ESTABLISHING AN ENDANGERED PLANT SPECIES PROGRAM; ENACTING A SECTION OF THE NMSA 1978.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. A new Section 9-10-10 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"9-10-10. ENDANGERED PLANT

SPECIES--DEFINITION--CONSERVATION--PENALTY PROTECTION--PERMITS.--

A. As used in this section, "endangered plant species" means any plant species whose prospects of survival within the state are in jeopardy or are likely, within the foreseeable future, to become jeopardized. Regulations passed by the natural resources department establishing a list of endangered plant species shall include those species listed in the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 or as that act may be amended.

B. The natural resources department shall conduct investigations of all species of plants in the state in order to develop information relating to population, distribution, habitat needs, limiting factors and other biological and ecological data, and to determine conservation measures and requirements necessary for their survival. On the basis of these investigations, the department shall establish a list of endangered plant species.

C. The department shall establish a program necessary for the conservation of listed endangered plant species. That program shall include research, census, law enforcement, habitat maintenance, propagation and transplantation. As used in this section, law enforcement shall be defined to be law enforcement for purposes of enforcement of the prohibition against taking, possession, transportation, exportation from this state, processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state of listed plants or plant materials.

D. The department shall have authority to protect species of plants determined to be endangered by prohibiting the taking, possession, transportation, exportation from this state, processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state of such species. Any person who violates the provisions of this subsection or any regulations issued pursuant to this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined not less than three hundred dollars (\$300) nor more than one thousand dollars (\$1000) or be imprisoned for a term of not more than one hundred twenty days or both. As used in this section, "possession" shall be defined to be possession of listed plants or plant materials for purposes of taking, transportation, exportation from this state, processing, sale or offer for sale or shipment within this state.

E.. The department may by permit allow collection otherwise prohibited by this section for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation or survival of the affected species by transplanting or other means, but such permit shall not authorize any action that would violate federal laws or regulations.

F. The department may enter into agreements with federal agencies, other states, agencies or political subdivisions of the state, or with individuals for administration and management of any program established under this section."

Up Top

by Roger Peterson

New Mexico has about 28000 acres (44 square miles) above timberline. For many of us this alpine tundra provides the best botanizing anywhere: a six- to 14-week growing season somehow produces an astonishing array of foreground color against scrumptious scenic backdrops with conspicuous ptarmigan, marmots, pikas, snowshoe hares, bighorns and elk to animate the views

Our tundra is in nine areas, all in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains except Sierra Blanca, which is marginally alpine. Largest, with 8200 acres, is the Truchas Peaks alpine, a network of narrow ridges and peaks spreading over four 7.5-minute maps. Next in size but at the other topographic extreme is the Costilla Massif on the Colorado border: in New Mexico 6600 acres of rolling sedge meadow, broken only here and there by the rock and cushion communities characteristic of the Truchas Peaks. Alpine areas around Wheeler Peak, the Latir Peaks, Gold Hill and the Santa Fe Range follow in size.

Most of our tundra is managed by the Forest Service, much of it protected by wilderness designation. Little Costilla Peak (near but not part of the Costilla Massif) has about 400 alpine acres, part of the recent "gift" (for tax write-offs) by Pennzoil to the Forest Service; it will be managed as a research natural area.

Almost half of our alpine plant species occur in the Arctic, and a few like alpine bistort (Polygonum viviparum) and alplily (Lloydia serotina) are also in the Alps themselves. Some species are rather restricted, though none is known just in New Mexico: we share Castilleja haydenii only with

southern Colorado, and snowlover (Chionophila jamesii) extends north only to southern Wyoming.

Our alpine flora has been long-but little-studied. Few botanists have camped up there, as one must, I think. The only thorough work is that of William Baker, 1983, "Alpine vegetation of Wheeler Peak, New Mexico, U.S.A.: gradient analysis, classification, and biogeography," in Arctic and Alpine Research. In 1982 I found a dozen alpine species new to New Mexico on the Costilla Massif, no surprise because this privately owned range has scarcely been visited by botanists or hikers. More surprising was finding another species, Crepis nana, on my first visit last summer to the Pecos Baldies (Santa Fe Range) --tramped over by botanists since 1902. I still don't know whether alpine sunflower or rydbergia (Hymenoxys grandiflora) is really in New Mexico, though it's included in Ivey's 1983 Flowering Plants of New Mexico and in Martin's 1964 account of Sierra Blanca.

Writers on alpine plants clearly love what they are doing and communicate that emotion. Though it lacks New Mexican data, Ann Zwinger and Beatrice Willard's Land above the Trees: A Guide to American Alpine Tundra (1972) is outstandingly the place to start any serious study of the Alpine, if one must start below 12000 feet. Small but deftly capturing the beauty, the science and the love is the place to start any serious study of the Alpine, if one must start below 12000 feet. Small but deftly capturing the beauty, the science and the love is Nicos and Helen Marinos' Plants of the Alpine Tundra (1981). For identification it should be

(Continued)

supplemented by B. Willard and C. Harris' Alpine Wildflowers of the Rocky Mountains (revised 1976); both of the latter booklets are available inexpensively from the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, Estes Park, Colorado.

(The foregoing notes are from slide talks to the Albuquerque and Santa Fe chapters in 1984 and 1985. Please write me at St. John's College, Santa Fe 87501 if you would like more bibliographic information or would like to discuss our alpine.)

Dear Editors,

Now is the time for all wildflower lovers to come to the aid of their plants!

National Wildlife Magazine (January 1985) reports that the American Horticulture Society (AHS) is offering a reward to groups (\$250) and individuals (\$100) who can find and document the existence of plants which are feared to be extinct.

The Society says there are 240 kinds of plants now believed extinct and another 450 are becoming dangerously rare (in the United States.)

This would be a great project for Chapters, clubs, youth organizations and wildflower buffs and nuts. So let's pitch in--shine

up those magnifying lenses, get your boots on and head for the hills, fields, roadsides, mountains, canyons, deserts and backyards!

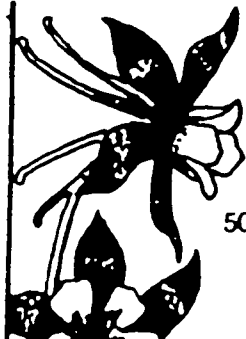
For a list of plants thought to be extinct in our region, send a self-addressed, 37-cent stamped envelope to:

Wild Flower Rediscovery Project
AHS, P.O. Box 0105
Mount Vernon, VA 22121

In the same vein, it's also reported by National Wildlife Magazine that two international organizations: World Wildlife Fund and International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, are launching worldwide campaigns to protect the Earth's remaining wild plants.

It's good to know that Wild Plants have so many friends.

Deb Swetnam



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___ Photography ___ Field Trips
___ Ethnobotany ___ Paleobotany
___ Growing for resale
___ Informal classes
___ Newsletter ___ Youth projects
___ Organize new chapter
___ Membership drive
___ Other (please specify)

How would you describe your level of expertise? What areas would you be willing to help with?

Are you a member of an organization with related purposes (Garden Club, NM Wildflower Association, etc.)?

Chapter Reports, continued

handicapped parking area. Disturbance of the land is being kept to a minimum. From many points in the park it is impossible to even see the parking area. While plans are moving along rapidly, they are still not far enough along to place the Bill Mayfield Memorial Park. At this time of year the most noticeable flowers in bloom were the mustards--a large and beautiful variety, some of which we had never seen before. Also, there was what looked like fringed gromwell, Lithospermum incisum of the forget-me-not family (Boraginaceae).

Jean Dodd

Santa Fe Chapter : Our guest in March was Charles Galt, formerly with the National Park Service at Carlsbad. He treated us to a show of 200 slides which were some of the most spectacular we've viewed so far. The show contained exceptional scenes of the wildflowers set against a background of blue skies and white clouds. The slides were taken in the Chihuahuan Desert, all the way from 3000 feet elevation to 7000 feet. Included were shots of every variety of cacti, Spanish dagger, sotol, rock roses and more. All present enjoyed the pictured beauty of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Dovie Thomas

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