

# NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

# NEWSLETTER

January/February 1987

Volume XII No. 1

## CALENDAR

- January 7 ALBUQUERQUE 7:30 pm Albuquerque Museum
- 21 SANTA FE Richard Atkinson of Southwest Trees and Landscapes will be the speaker. 7:30 pm St. John's College
- 22 CHAVEZ County chapter will meet at ENMMC staff lounge to determine whether the chapter will disband or continue on a limited basis. ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS SHOULD PLAN TO ATTEND THIS MOST IMPORTANT MEETING!!
- February 4 ALBUQUERQUE 7:30 pm Albuquerque Museum
- 11 LAS CRUCES 7:30 pm Rm. 190 Ag. Bldg. NMSU
- 18 SANTA FE 7:30 pm St. John's College "Lichens & Mosses" G. Tierny
- 22 OTERO 2:00 pm Tularosa Elementary School (East at Higuera, 3 blocks to corner of 1st and Highera-1st is also Mescalero Rd.)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A new year brings the promise of spring to another growing season. Seed catalogues arrive to tempt you with their beauty. This is a good time to review last year's notes, organize and label your slide collection, and plan for this year's garden.

We are excited about the Native Plant Symposium and the Penstemon Society Meeting—both in June. I hope you will consider attending one or both meetings. If you would like to be in the thick of it—volunteer to work on the planning committees.

Welcome to our returning officers and board members!

# Books *Books* Books *Books*

A 136 page book of maps showing the vegetation zones of New Mexico by county is available from the Natural Resources Department of the state of NM. The book, entitled A Handbook of Vegetation Maps Of New Mexico Counties may be obtained for \$13 from: New Mexico Natural Resources Department, Resource Management and Development Division, Resource Survey Section, Villagra Bldg., Rm. 129, 408 Galisteo Street, Santa Fe, NM 87503.

Free Gardener's Guide to Rooting New Plants from Union Carbide Agricultural Products (attention Specialty Products), P. O. Box 12014, Research Triangle Park, NC 27769

Intermountain Flora, Volume 1: Geological and Botanical History of the Region, Its Plant Geography, Glossary, Vascular Cryptogams, and Gymnosperms. Clothbound, 270 pp. \$35.05. This has been reprinted and is available from Scientific Publications Department, The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458.



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Vice President--Tom Wootten  
Recording Secretary--Dovie Thomas  
Treasurer--Jean Dodd  
Membership Secretary--Judith Phillips

## CHAPTER CONTACTS

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### OTERO CHAPTER

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### Newsletter Editor

Susan Wachter, 2500 Norment Rd. SW, Albuquerque, 87105 (873-2993)

# Meet Our People

If you've ever had the urge to be a foster parent to a hummingbird, Michele Peters is the woman who can arrange it. Since 1982, Michele has been actively involved in Wildlife Rescue, a volunteer group organized six years ago by Rio Grande Zoo docents to "Raise, Rehabilitate and Release" wildlife threatened by accident and human encroachment on ever shrinking habitats. Spring and summer are the most demanding seasons for Wildlife Rescue, and the group holds pre-season training sessions to initiate new foster parents in rehabilitation techniques. The 24 hour hotline (344-2500), located at the Rio Grande Nature Center, is answered in shifts by volunteers who want to help but can't afford the 24 hour a day, 6-8 week commitment that raising an orphan from rescue to release time entails.

Those hardcore rescuers, the ones like Michele (with the aid of husband, David, who as a teacher has-or used to have- summers free) feed and house as many as 20 displaced birds at a time, May through September. Their facilities range from soft-lined baskets as nest substitutes, to a wire mesh flight cage in the back yard. The back yard is also landscaped with birds in mind. The mostly native plantings were selected for color, fragrance, nectar and seed forage as well as ease of maintenance (who's got time to water much with 20 mouths to feed?) While individual birds may stay only 6 to 8 weeks, the routine remains constant through successive "new rescues".

Early care involves initially keeping infants (birds and/or mammals) in a dark, quiet, warm enclosure avoiding stressful handling until the trauma of displacement ebbs. Injured critters require appropriate first aid and cat-caught-birds usually need antibiotics. As trauma eases, activity increases and feeding and access to fluids- at 20-30 minute intervals for nestlings, 30 to 40 minute intervals for fledglings-is the recommended care. Consistency is very important. Anyone who has tried to keep a nest of baby birds satisfied may wonder what planet the coiner of the phrase "eats like a bird" was visiting from.

The Wildlife Rescue workload would be cut dramatically if well-intentioned but uninformed people would try to return dis-

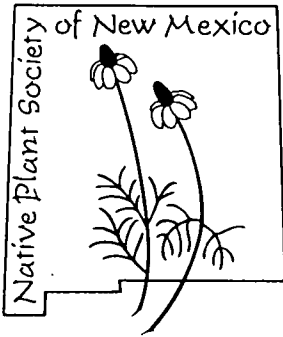
placed babies to their nests or rig-up substitute nests and remain nearby, quietly observing, as long as it takes to see if the parent birds return before they call the rescue hotline. Rejection of a renested baby bird by its parents is rare, and birds are much more adept at rearing their young than we humans ever will be.

Although the aim is to release all rescues when they are able to fend for themselves, occasionally, due to injury or deformity, an orphan may become a permanent resident. Rice-A-Roni, an owl whose wings are deformed due to unskilled care during infancy (rice and hamburger do not make healthy owls), is now in the expert care of a licensed Wildlife Rescue member who uses the bird in show-and-tell educational programs.

Wildlife Rescue is partially funded through Share With Wildlife (you might like to remember that at tax time). The balance of funding, which pays for food, vet supplies and telephone service, comes from memberships. Active members, the foster parents and phone crew, pay an annual dues of \$12; supporting members dues are \$25, donors \$50, and patrons \$250. Besides the bimonthly newsletter currently edited by Michele (has she taught sparrows to type, hunt and peck technique?); the supporting through patron members receive bonuses of hummingbird feeders, notecards, etc. depending upon the membership category. The bonus the active members receive is the growing insight into nature they nurture along with their charges. And, if their last brood matures in time to migrate south for winter, they also receive the luxury of a life of their own during the dormant season. If they are at all like most gardeners I know, the relief from growing season chores so welcome in October is well-worn by February and Michele and her cohorts are eagerly anticipating the spring-summer marathon.

General meetings of Wildlife Rescue are 7:00 pm, the third Wednesday of every month at Los Altos Christian Church, 11900 Haines NE ( $\frac{1}{2}$  block east of Juan Tabo). New faces are always welcome.

By Judith Phillips



# NPS-NM

## BOOKS AND SHIRTS



T-shirts Please add 50¢ postage for each T-shirt ordered.

NPS logo-Coneflower (Tan with green ink) \$6.00

10th Anniversary (Turquoise with black ink) \$6.00

Sweatshirt

Available by order ONLY. Price \$11.00 plus 50¢ postage for each sweatshirt.

Black Ink on Turquoise

Green Ink on Tan

Sizes S,M,L,XL

Allow 3 weeks for printing

All T-shirts and sweatshirts are 50/50 poly/cotton.

### BOOKS

### Books

### Books

NPS-NM is pleased to offer books for sale to our members at a discount.

	<u>Retail</u>	<u>Member Price</u>
Roadside Plants of Northern New Mexico (Tierney)	9.95	7.95
Summer Wildflowers of New Mexico (Martin)	12.95	10.40
The Wildflower Meadow Book (L. Martin)	12.95	10.40
Audubon Guide to Wildflowers, Western (Spellenberg)	13.50	10.80
New Mexico Grasses, A Vegetative Key	8.95	7.20
A Garden of Wildflowers (Art)	12.95	10.40
Flowering Plants of New Mexico (Ivey)	22.00	21.00
(Second Edition includes more southern plants)		
Flowering Plants of New Mexico (Ivey)	13.00	12.00
How to Grow Native Plants of TX & SW (Nokes)	26.95	21.60
Landscaping with Wildflowers & Native Plants (Ortho)	5.95	4.80
Trees & Shrubs of the Uplands (Elmore)	7.95	6.40
Edible Native Plants of the Rocky Mts. (Harrington)	9.95	7.95
Grasses of Southwestern United States (Gould)	8.95	7.20
Rocky Mountain Wildflowers	10.95	8.80
Woody Plants of the Southwest (Lamb)	12.95	10.40
Field Guide to SW & Texas Plants (Niehaus, etal.)	12.95	10.40
Spring Wildflowers of New Mexico (Martin)	12.95	10.40
Rare & Endemic Plants of New Mexico	12.95	10.40
Landscaping with Texas Native Plants (Wasowski & Ryan)	23.95	19.40

Please add \$ .75 postage for each book ordered. Allow 2-3 weeks for shipping.

Make checks payable to: NPS-NM Books, P.O. Box 934, Los Lunas NM 87031

# National Penstemon Meeting

St. John's College in Santa Fe will be the site of the 1987 Annual Meeting of the American Penstemon Society, the first to be held in New Mexico. The three-day get-together will take place June 20-23. Meals and rooms will be available for \$35.00 per person, per day, double occupancy.

Saturday activities begin, after registration and lunch, with visits to home gardens and commercial plantings that feature penstemons in and around Santa Fe. In the late afternoon a reception with wine or punch, cheese and fruit will give everyone a chance to get acquainted and view a show of cut, potted and pressed specimens of penstemons that all participants are asked to bring. The evening is free to give you a chance to try your choice among the varied cuisines available in the city.

Sunday morning we will get an early start for a trip to Albuquerque, stopping to see P. ambiguus in its natural habitat on the way. After visits to several Albuquerque gardens, we will take the spectacular tram ride to cool Sandia Crest and walk to a wildflower meadow to eat our sack lunches while enjoying several wild penstemons and marvelous views. On the way back we will stop at the farm of Plants of the Southwest, where many varieties of penstemons are grown, and visit their display garden. After dinner at St. John's, we will have slides and talks by a variety of experts all about penstemons.

On Monday a choice of several walks hikes or car trips to areas where penstemons bloom in the wild will be offered. You will again have a sack lunch to take along. Late in the afternoon, several nurseries will bring penstemons to St. John's for your

selection to take back with you. In the evening you can take an open air jitney ride around the beautiful older parts of the city with lively commentary and gossip about its past and present residents.

If you are really energetic, get up before dawn on Tuesday for a quick trip to Tent Rocks and Narrow Canyon near Cochiti Dam and Pueblo. The soil is sand and pumice and the formations and plants are outstanding but it gets very hot there during the day in June. You must check out of your room by 11:00 am, but do plan to take time to visit the state museum complex, less than a mile from the college. The Santa Fe chapter of NPS-NM has been working on a display garden of native plants there and the Folk Art museum is a delight. It is expected that the new Museum of Indian Arts and Culture will also be open then and the Wheelwright Museum is nearby, a small jewel to visit.

The meeting is open to non-members who are interested in penstemons, but why don't you join the Society now and enjoy the benefits of membership, including twice-yearly bulletins, a seed exchange, round-robin letters, library and slides by mail, and regular get-togethers with other penstemon enthusiasts? Write to Orville M. Steward, P.O. Box 33, Plymouth, Vermont, 05056. Dues are \$7.50, single or couple. It is hoped this meeting will bring enough enthusiasts together to form a Southwestern Regional Chapter.

Send your reservations and deposits by March 15 to Ellen Wilde, 110 Calle Pinonero, Santa Fe, N.M. 87505. Attendees will be limited to 65.

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## American Penstemon Society Annual Meeting

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Conference participation per person	\$10.00
Meals and room at the college per person	\$35.00 deposit
Meals only per person	\$20.00 deposit

Balances will be due at registration, as well as optional tickets at group rates so that you can choose which you care to participate in. If you have questions please call Ellen Wilde (505) 982-1406.

# CHAPTER REPORTS

## Otero

The annual potluck coincided with the first snow of the season in the mountains so the Mescalero Tradition Councilors were unable to attend. The potluck started with a mesquite bean to flour cake display. First the beans, then the results of grinding them in a coffee mill. Next the results of sifting followed by the flour plus water. Flat mesquite cakes were served as were muffins made with mesquite flour and muffins made with amaranth seed flour. Jellies included mesquite, prickly pear and algerita. Pickled Jerusalem artichokes, jellied prickly pear fruit salad and green cactus soup were on the menu. Desserts included prickly pear dream pie, sherbert and a torte made of a cake shell, layer of cream filling and a topping of red wild gooseberry sauce. Our hosts were Dave and Hazel Frankel who provided a number of non-native dishes just in case the bad weather left us with little to eat. A unanimous decision was made to include recipes in future potluck suppers.

The November meeting had the Mescalero Tradition Counselor presenting a program on the uses of native plants for both medicine and food. The program is funded by the state and its purpose is to help prevent substance abuse by giving children both pride and knowledge about how to use native plants. They have a number of posters with a sample of the plant parts used—seeds, berries, stems, roots, etc., the Apache name, and a descriptive English name such as ghost plant used to create smoke to purify people and houses after a death, thunderweed used to ward off storm damage to a home or hot-root used for colds.

Since none of the material uses scientific names for the plants and the common English name is also not often used, the counselors will call the NPS in the Spring and again in the Fall to go out with them to identify the plants used. These additional names will be added to the posters.

During the business meeting the calendar for 1987 was mapped out to include our plant sale on May 9 and a trip to McKettrick Canyon May 30-31.

## Albuquerque

The November meeting featured Dr. Wm. C. Martin from UNM who spoke on poisonous plants growing in New Mexico. Dr. Martin stressed that many poisonous plants are "person specific", that is they affect different people differently. While one plant may cause only minor problems to one individual, another person may suffer a far worse reaction.

With slides to aid his presentation, Dr. Martin covered many individual plants as well as plant groups. A few axioms gleaned from the presentation were,

" Though not completely proven, Senecios as a group are thought to be poisonous.

Unless you are absolutely certain of a plant's identity, leave the red berried plants alone.

And perhaps the most important, There are no universal tests to verify a poisonous plant. Know your plants!!

The December pot luck supper was held at the Heights Community Center since the Albuquerque Museum was hosting the Mayan exhibit. The program following was by Robert Cox, County Agent for Bernalillo County who spoke on landscaping with native plants. Also discussed was the possibility of beginning a Xeriscape program in Bernalillo County and surrounding areas.

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## Insurance

We will need short-term Liability Insurance for the symposium in June and we'd rather do business with a member. Please contact Lisa at Native Plant Symposium, P.O. Box 934, Los Lunas, NM 87031 or call 865-4684 (days).

# "Supergrass"

(Thank you to Michele Peters who sent the Newsweek article from which this is based--September 15, 1986)

The work "lawn" has almost attained the level of another "four letter word" with many homeowners. In the Southwest we can understand people's reluctance to use precious water on what seems a nuisance. In moister climates the battle with insects, disease and fertilizings has jaded many to the greensword.

Yet a geneticist at the University of Alberta, Jan Weijer, has developed new grass varieties that thrive on little fertilizer, sun, mowing and water. Bred from samples of 23 species of spiked grasses and bluegrasses from the Rocky Mountains, these species are noted for their unusual (for turfgrasses) adaptive properties to harsh growing conditions.

Such "toughies" should make even the most anti-lawn gardener take note. Unfortunately so has the turfgrass industry which would loose billions in sales of fertilizer as well as pesticides. Other related fields such as lawnmowers and grass care professionals are also upset about news of these "super grasses".

Availability of these grasses is not expected for several years while seed stock is built up. In the mean time, big business will try to permanently keep the seed from ever reaching the market.



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*Dear NPS-NM....*

Hart Brent-Collins, a student of ethnobotany at Smith College is seeking a source of the following seeds. If you can help, her address is Buckland Road, P.O. Box 146, Ashfield, MA 01330 (Phone (413) 628-4422).

- Angelica hendersonii
- Astragalus calycosus
- A. caryocarpus
- A. Haydenianus
- A. Kentrophyta
- A. striatus
- A. impensus
- A. allochrous
- A. menziesii
- Dioscorea villosa
- Glycyrrhiza lepidota
- Lycium torreyi
- Scutellaria eiplobifolia
- Oplopanax horridus
- Campanula parryi

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Other Interested family members:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose your check payable to:

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P.O. Box 5917  
Santa Fe, NM 87502

Annual Dues:

\_\_\_ Individual & Family \$8.00  
\_\_\_ Friend of the Society \$25.00

Please send a gift membership and card to:

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To better serve our membership, please check areas of particular interest.

Conservation:

- \_\_\_ Endangered species, Habitats
- \_\_\_ Restoring abused areas
- \_\_\_ Water conservation
- \_\_\_ Propagation \_\_\_ Seed Collection

Landscaping: \_\_\_ Residential  
\_\_\_ Civic \_\_\_ Commercial \_\_\_ Highway

Special Uses: \_\_\_ Food \_\_\_ Fiber

- \_\_\_ Medicinal \_\_\_ Dyes
- \_\_\_ 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.)?

## Master Gardener

Do you have a few free hours this coming year to help your fellow gardener? Perhaps you could put your free time and gardening knowledge as well as your enthusiasm for native plants to excellent use as a volunteer with the Master Gardener program. Begun 15 years ago by the Cooperative Extension Service in Washington, the nation-wide relies upon gardeners helping fellow gardeners down the proverbial garden path wrought with insects, diseases and other horticultural horrors.

The Master Gardener program in New Mexico was first established in Bernalillo County in part by Jim Sais, Urban Horticulturist for New Mexico State University. Through his continuing efforts, Master Gardener programs are also in San Juan, Santa Fe, Los Alamos, Dona Ana and Chavez counties.

Each program is supervised by Extension Service personnel who tailor the program to fit the needs of the population. Orientation and training sessions will begin soon. If you feel you could help in one of the state's Master Gardener program, contact the county agent in one of the above listed counties.



## This and That....

The Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute is offering copies of the publication entitled Invited Papers From The Second Chihuahuan Desert Symposium. The event was held in 1983. The softbound book has 272 pages and covers natural resource topics for the region. Cost is \$10.95 plus 56¢ tax for CDRI members and \$12.95 plus 66¢ for nonmembers. Also include a \$1 shipping charge for each book ordered. Contact: CDRI, Box 1334, Alpine, TX 79831

From the Northern Nevada NPS October 1986 newsletter.....

The Mariposa Foundation for Conservation, Inc. requests seed of any species of Camassia and Calochortus. They are attempting to wildflowers under controlled conditions for later replanting in safe locations. For more information, write to Dr. R.D. Watson, 415 Residence St., Moscow, ID 83843

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