



NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

NEWSLETTER

May/June, 1988

Vol. XII No. 3

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS

Y'ALL COME TO SANTA FE-OTERO GET-TOGETHER

On the weekend of July 9 and 10th, the Otero chapter and Santa Fe chapter of the NPS-NM will join forces in Santa Fe for a weekend of plant explorations and socializing. All members and friend of NPS-NM are encouraged to attend.

Friday evening, July 8, a greetings and potluck supper will be held. Saturday, July 9, plan for a day of botanical rambling along the road to Tierra Amarilla and then along Route 64 to Tres Piedras. This lovely drive will feature many wildflowers. In the evening there will be a board of director's meeting for NPS-NM.

Sunday, July 10, will be more botanical ramblings, but this time in the Santa Fe area as well as visits to selected gardens in the area.

Event details are still in planning, but if you need more information, contact Mimi Hubby (983-1658), Ellen Wilde (982-1406) or Jean Dodd (434-3041). These are two very active chapters and we encourage members from throughout the state to join them for what will be an interesting weekend.

ALASKA SUMMER STUDY

An exciting trip is being offered this summer to study and photograph the natural history of the Denali Parks of Alaska. Travel is by train and river rafts on this 12 day backpacking expedition. First class begins July 13 and the second class begins July 27. College credit is available. Total cost is \$450. For details, write instructor, John Wenger, P.O. Box 240171, Anchorage, AK 99524-0171.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

NPS will be journeying into a often forgotten area of the far southwestern part of the state, the "boot heel" if you wish, when we visit the Peloncillo Mountains October 28, 29 and 30th. This fascinating area with plants more akin to Mexico than surrounding flora is a "must" for New Mexico plant enthusiasts. More information will be available in upcoming newsletters.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Spring has definitely arrived in most of New Mexico-in fact it feels more like Summer! Time to get out and work in the garden or just get out. Activities are planned all over the state. Mark your calendars.

The Board of NPS-NM will meet during the joint Otero-Santa Fe weekend, stop by and offer your two cents worth. Beck Smith of Silver City has been spearheading native plant activities there and it look very promising for a Silver city area chapter! A Xeriscape Conference in Los Alamos is tentatively scheduled for the end of August. Watch for more on this!

Let me know what you think of the column-should we continue it as-change it or scrap it entirely? Remember it is your newsletter and your native plant society.

AGRICULTURE OPEN HOUSES

NMSU has a network of Agricultural Science Centers throughout New Mexico. These Centers conduct research to improve agriculture in their areas and to promote new techniques and plants in New Mexico. Centers evaluate a variety of plants from major crops (alfalfa, wheat, chile, etc.) to more specialized topics (windbreaks, vegetable varieties, fruit crops). Some Centers are also evaluating many of our native plants.

This year is designated the Centennial year for NMSU and each of the 8 Centers will have a "Field-Day" or open house. Below are the locations and dates of the open

houses: Clayton	May 26
Clovis	May 27
Tucumcari	August 12
Los Lunas	August 24
Farmington	August 26
Artesia	September 1
Alcalde (Española)	tentative September 4
Mora	October 15.

This is a great chance to visit with the Center staff about their research and learn about the exciting activities in New Mexico agriculture.

MESCAL COOKING

NPS members are especially invited to attend the gathering and cooking of mescal by the Mescaleros at the Living Desert Museum near Carlsbad May 19, 20, 21 and 22. Two nights the Mountain God Dance will be performed by one of the Mescalero dancing groups.

DROUGHT TOLERANT & NATIVE
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CHAPTER CONTACTS

If you have questions about the NPS-NM, contact the person listed below for your area.

Albuquerque: Walter Graf
4735 W. Lea SW
Albuquerque, 87105
877-6469

Las Cruces: Melanie Florence
R.T. 1 Box 711
Las Mesa, 88044
525-3529

Otero: Jean Dodd
1302 Canyon Rd.
Alamogordo, 88310
434-3041

Santa Fe: Mimi Hubby
525 Camino Cabra
Santa Fe, 87501
983-1658

also

Silver City: Becky Smith
538-5350

Portales: Lisa Johnston
P.O. Box 142
Portales, 88130

May 2nd through June 10th, 1988

The Governor's Gallery
presents

New Mexico Flora

James Asher	Selena Lee
Walter Chappell	Charles Mann
Beth Dennis	Dr. William C. Martin
Ellie Dunn	Forrest Moses
Carol Eastes	Ann Moul
Barbara Erdman	Gail Russell
Michelle Goodman	Anne Sawyer
Una Hanbury	Shane Shane
Ted Hodoba	Richard Solomon
Phyllis Hughes	Prof. Richard Spellenberg
Robert DeWitt Ivey	Talavaya
Paula King	Niki Threlkeld
Paul Knight	Art Usner
Kate Krasin	Yévonnn Wilson-Ramsey
Dr. Dale Zimmerman	

BOOK

HORTUS??

NPS-NM has added Hortus III to its mail order library. This definitive plant reference produced by the staff of the L.H. Bailey Hortorium of Cornell University is available for \$100.00 (retail \$125.00). Postage is usually \$1.00 per book but for this brute, better make it \$2.00. Contact NPS Books, P.O. Box 1206, Portales, NM 88130.

Robert R. Humphrey, University of Arizona Professor Emeritus wrote the recently published: 90 years and 535 miles; Vegetation Changes along the Mexican Border (University of New Mexico Press, \$29.95). Photographs taken in the 1890's are compared with others taken in the 1980's. The results of "long-exerted grazing pressures" are dramatically evident. April, 1988 Arizona Native Plant Soc. newsletter



CHAPTER REPORTS



LAS CRUCES CHAPTER REPORT

Our first meeting on February 10 consisted first of organizing the field trips and meetings of the coming year. Then we had two interesting slide shows. Tom Wootten showed us some aerial slides of some of the proposed wilderness areas in Southwestern New Mexico. Then Bob Reeves, showed us slides of some early bloomers near Las Cruces. We all became excited about the year to come and all the flowers we will soon see.

Our second meeting on March 9 consisted of a very interesting talk on household herbs by Helen Polley and Helen Richmond. Helen Richmond grew plants of anise, caraway, dill, fennel, cilantro, chives, borage, basil, sage, summer savory, sweet marjoram and thyme in her greenhouse and brought them to the meeting for everyone to look at, touch and smell. Helen Polley talked about each of the herbs mentioned above.

We all learned many interesting tidbits about herbs and some members had more personal knowledge to add. Did you know that anise is used to flavor livestock feed (to make it more palatable)? Or that caraway was used as far back as the neolithic time (traces of caraway seeds were found in old ruins)? Dill seeds need to be harvested before they are ripe and then allowed to ripen. Fennel is a particular plant--many other plants will not grow next to it and it will not grow next to many other plants. Borage was surprisingly prickly and has beautiful blue violet flowers with black anthers. Everyone was very interested in this presentation what with spring just around the corner. Thanks to Helen and Helen!

Our first field trip was on Saturday, March 5th to Soledad Rocks just east of Las Cruces at the base of the Organ Mountains. Very few plants were in flowers. The flowering

plants were Lesquerella fendleri, bladderpod, which had yellow flowers, an unknown Lesquerella species which had white flowers, and the early blooming cactus Neolloydia intertexta which had a green creamy white flower with a bright pink stigma. The green flowered hedge hog cactus Echinocereus chloranthus as still in bud--we were one or two days too early to see its flower. There were a few rosettes of unknown species and the Ocotillos were still bare. The perennial grasses were starting to green up and four different species of ferns were seen green and open.

A little lower in elevation, Twist flower (Streptanthus species) and Spectacle pod (Dithyrea wislinzenii) were in bud or in flower. We combed the area pretty thoroughly walking in the rocks and on south-facing slopes, hoping to see more plants in flower.

Unfortunately, instead of a rare or endangered plant, we found a live gray fox caught in a trap. After five hours of informing the authorities and some of us waiting near the fox, an animal activist came and took the fox to a veterinarian. The animal's leg needed to be amputated and the animal was euthanized. We learned a lot about the trapping lawn in New Mexico (or the lack of them) through this experience.

Our second field trip to Tom Mays State Park, now called Franklin Mountain State Park, was very successful. We saw many cacti: Echinocereus chloranthus (Cylinder Bells) with green flowers, Ancistrocactus uncinatus (Catclaw cactus) with dark maroon-brown flowers, the tiny one inch diameter Epithelantha micromeris (Button Cactus) with tiny pale pink flowers, and Opuntia phaeacantha (Prickly Pear) and Oryphantha strobiliformis (Corncob Escobaria) which were not flowering.

The day was windy but that didn't stop us from hiking up several ridges in search of more flowers. The area is semidesert grassland dominated by Agave lecheguilla and various grasses (Black grama Boutelous eripoda was the most common). Agave neomexicana occurred sparsely on the higher elevations. Yucca torreyi was flowering, leaves were out on the Mesquites, and Rhus microphylla (?) was covered with white flowers. Dalea formosa (Feather Plume) was beautiful with its yellow and rose colored flowers. Although the evergreens Rhus choriophylla and Garrya wightii were not flowering, they dotted the landscape with green. I could go on and on with all the small flowers seen on this trip. With space being limited, I will just conclude that everyone was very happy that Spring is here!

Melanie

OTERO CHAPTER REPORT

The Otero Chapter opened the 1988 season with a slide show in the newly remodeled Alamogordo Public Library. Slides shown included native trees, shrubs, cacti and succulents and wildflowers from field trips in both the desert and the mountains. San Andreas Canyon slides by John McNelly included his big Torreyi Yucca-the one 23' tall. It is indeed impressive.

The library furnished a landscaping plan of the plantings after the remodeling program was finished. Many of the plants are native and from Tom Wootten's Dry Country Plants. Carlitta Harvey, NPS member, was in charge of the landscaping.

Now that we have been to Hueco Tanks we would highly recommend it to others. See Texas Highways August, 1985 for more information. The only plant in bloom in any quantity was the Mexican Buckeye-Ungnadia speciosa. It was growing mostly up against the rocks. Littleleaf mulberry-Morus microphylla, Silktassel of the Garrya Family were

there. Sotol, Yucca elata and Lechuguilla were there but nothing in bloom although the Yucca torreyi were blooming a few miles away in El Paso. One lone clump of Echinocereus gurneyii had bright red blossoms.

Essentially Hueco Tanks features several piles of heaped up rocks if you can imagine this on a grand scale. Tom Perea has been going out there for 50 years and was an excellent guide. Going from the hot day to the lovely cool of a rock shelter and seeing the rock art on the walls and ceilings immediately opens up many possibilities to the imagination to one taking refuge there. The huecos (natural basins) make interesting patterns in the rocks besides furnishing a water supply.

At the Edible Native Potluck, 4/23, there were no deserts! First time. We did have lovely, pale green-spinach-spaghetti with pinyons; a casserole of cheses, green chiles, a layer of tumbleweed, all topped with sliced tomatos; ginger chicken with wild sunchokes; beef and cactus. A choice of Nopalitos (cactus strips) or Quelites (Lanb's quarter) both with a number of additions and seasonings were served with freshly made, small corn tortillas.

Then there was the Morton's yard! We really think they wave a magic wand once in awhile to get the results they do. A large collection of cacti was in bloom. Mealy sage was enormous and in full bloom-in the rest of the area it is less than a foot tall. Mainstay plants include Mexican Elder, Rabbitbrush and Desert Willow.

Jean

BEAR MOUNTAIN GUEST RANCH

Guided Tours :

Wildflowers, Birds,

Ghost Towns



Myra McCormick (505) 538-2538

Silver City, N.M. 88061

CALENDAR

- | | | | |
|------------|---|-------------|---|
| Otero | <p>May 7 Plant Sale, 9-1:00, Garden Center</p> <p>June 25 Three Rivers fieldtrip. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the turnoff from Hwy. 54. Bring lunch and water.</p> <p>July 30 Monument Canyon fieldtrip. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Lodge in Timberon. Trail to Monument Canyon Waterfall about 1 1/2 miles. Bring lunch and water.</p> | Santa Fe | <p>May 4 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Opening and reception for the exhibit, "New Mexico Flora", at the Governor's Gallery.</p> <p>May 15 Plant walk and pot luck in Eldorado at the home of Aurora Sanchez-Baca. Carpool at 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>May 29 Carpool from P.E.R.A. for botanical rambling.</p> |
| Las Cruces | <p>May 8 7:00 a.m. fieldtrip to Carizozo Lava Flow. Entrance Fee will be charged. Meet at NMSU Pan Am parking lot.</p> <p>May 11 7:30 p.m. meeting at NMSU A Bldg., Medicinal Plants by Pat Penfield.</p> <p>June 5 7:00 a.m. Springtime-Luna Campground-San Mateo Mts. Meet at Pan Am parking lot.</p> <p>June 8 7:30 p.m. meeting at NMSU Ag. Bldg., Chaparral fire Ecology by Melanie Florence.</p> <p>July 10 8 a.m. Broad Canyon Pot Luck Picnic</p> <p>July 13 7:30 p.m. meeting by guest speaker Scott Florence of the BLM, The BLM's Role in Managing Rare and Endangered Plants.</p> | Albuquerque | <p>May 6 For those not attending the opening in Santa Fe of the art exhibit, chapter program to be announced.</p> <p>June 1 Ted Hodoba on plants of the grasslands...or some such.</p> |

RAIN FOREST EXTINCTION

Based on island biogeography, when one tenth of an area is destroyed, approximately half of its species will be lost. If this holds true then the continuing destruction of tropical rain forest may mean the loss of 750,000 species of plants and animals within the next few decades.

LEGUMES

The legumes, the world's third largest flowering plant family with 18,000 herbs, shrubs and trees, are so self sufficient they will grow anywhere. The Tamarugo tree of Chile, is able to thrive in the Atacama Desert where the soil is nearly totally salt and the only moisture is from mist in the air.

Arbor Day, March/April
1988

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?? SILVER CITY CHAPTER ??

Native plant rumblings have been heard over Silver City way as Becky Smith along with nearly a dozen other native plant lovers are busy organizing the Gila Native Plant Society. Already NPS-NM has good representation in that area and we hope our members are helping this fledgling organization. The Gila Native Plant Society contacted NPS-NM about possible affiliation and found us to be "cooperative and welcoming in reply to inquiries and seemed to operate in an effective and informal manner." Informal indeed. Already the new organization has held a plant exchange and is discussing plant for a botanical survey of the Big Ditch in Silver City. The last survey was done in 1937. We hope if they decide to undertake this project they share their findings with the NPS-NM newsletter..

ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER REPORT

Mr. Panayoti Kelaidis from the Denver Botanic Garden stopped in Albuquerque on his way to the Penstemon Symposium in Arizona in order to share with Albuquerque chapter members as well as members and friends of the Rio Grande Botanic Garden his beliefs on the benefits of a botanical garden. Mr. Kelaidis stressed the difficulties plants experience in our arid climate and the need to know more about the plants able to tolerate these extreme conditions. His slide presentation covered many alpine plants at the Denver Botanic Garden and stressed those that have shown drought tendencies.

A surprise bonus was penstemons for sale at the end of the meeting to benefit the Rio Grande Botanic Garden. The Kelaidis' were taking the penstemons to Arizona when the question of border inspection arose. One group's loss was another's gain.



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___ 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.)?

WHITE SANDS UPDATE

Even though the Otero Chapter goes to the Missile Range about the same time every year, the plants blooming are always different and in different places. This year we were 2 weeks early and saw many star points (Microseris linearifolia) in bud or in blossom. Last year we mostly saw their lovely seed heads. While this year's trip turned up a surprising number of blooming plants, we were most conscious of rain, hail and lunch in the bus.

In addition to the star points, we also saw pepper grass, scorpionweed, desert marigold, ocotillo, prickly poppies, gilia, spectacle pod, Tahoka daisy. We also saw Peganum harmala, Dyssodia acerosa, Leuclene ericoides, and Nama hispidum.

Our assigned guide, archaeologist Bob Burton, took us to Trinity site (first atomic bomb explosion), the McDonald house where some of the bomb was assembled, and past the nuclear explosion simulation test site. He pointed out the different mountain ranges and canyons and sorted out approximate locations of county lines. He also told of findings indicating Indian activities over time. We saw many wild horses, deer and an oryx.

If looking at plants on an active military range is foreign to you, we are allowed one accompanied trip a year. The Army furnishes a bus, driver and a guide who knows how to get around on the range and where we can't go that particular day. In spite of the weather it was a great trip. This is such a beautiful state.

Jean

REAGAN AND WILDFLOWERS

Last January President Reagan was explaining the reason why he needed a line-item veto when he chose to use an example of needless spending a bill for a \$50,000 research grant for New Mexico to assist in the commercialization of wildflowers. Just as we are encouraging people to look at our native plants for new possibilities in landscaping and soil stabilization, we receive a slap of bad publicity.

Wildflowers were not the only example used by Mr. Reagan, the cranberry and blueberry industry also received a salvo. Here we have three industries utilizing native plants and we are held up to national ridicule.

Sure would be nice for those of us slugging it out in the trenches to receive a little positive recognition from above.

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