

# NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

# NEWSLETTER

May / June 1989

Vol. XIII No. 3

## BOSQUE DEL APACHE MEADOW MADNESS

### UPDATE AND VIDEO

NPS-NM has an Olympic caliber team if sowing, raking and mulching ever become a triathlon event. In about 3 hours our crew of 35 game individuals covered 2 acres with pretreated seeds, raked them in, covered with a mulch of Blue Grams, Spike Muhly, Little Blue Stem and Galleta hay. Then we stood back and watched the new sprinkler system christen our handiwork. This project continues to be stuff dreams are made from. Amazing what a group of people working together can accomplish and what a joy the process can be.

Special thanks to Bev Grady and her helpers who choreographed the event, to the Bosque del Apache staff who provided the excellent accommodations and tours and who worked with us Sunday morning. And of course a special thank you to the Merry Meadow Makers for their energetic teamwork.

The Meadow Madness video featuring the Merry Meadow Makers team, produced by Gil Grady will be available soon. Those of you who feel that you missed something special--YOU DID!!

Future planting dates will be announced in this newsletter. More work is yet to come.

The following is a partial list of seeds sown in the Meadow Madness:

Blue Flax  
Penstemon barbatus  
pseudospectabilis  
ambiguus  
strictus  
cardinalis  
virgatus  
angustifolia

Gayfeather  
Black Eyed Susan  
Purple Coneflower  
Paperflower  
Gilia coronifolia

Judith

# Welcome New Members!!

## Albuquerque

Merrille Dolan  
Kimberly Johnson  
Richard Jurgensen  
Phil & Kathy Garcia

## Las Cruces

Phyllis N. Gottshall  
Paula Johnson  
Marianne H. Thaeler  
Nancy Freund  
Jo Ann Zembiec

## Otero

Grace Flinn  
Elizabeth Mahill  
Jack & Lil Bristol  
Raquel J. Batty  
Denise A. Lang

## Santa Fe

Victor Zalma  
Jennifer French  
Richard & Karin Salzmann

## Silver City

Theresa L. Germain

## Out of State

Wynn Anderson, El Paso  
Stacey Stechner, Grand Junction  
Colorado  
Lillian Champion, Yucaipa,  
California  
Jeanne Hosch, El Paso  
Raymond Shader, Ft. Collins,  
Colorado  
Dorothy Bybee, Conrose, Texas

Specializing in Flowering Natives



Dry Country Plants

Tom Wooten  
(505) 522-4434

5840 N. Main  
Las Cruces, N.M. 88011

## AMERICAN NATIVE LANDSCAPE AWARD

The American Native Landscape Award is given to the person or organization that best exemplifies the creative native plant uses. Consideration points include: succession, seasonal interest, ecological fitness, regional adaptation, and artistic flavor. There are four categories and an award will be given in each category that receives suitable entries. Awards will be given at the Native Plant Conference in Cullowhee, N.C. on July 29, 1989. Entries must be received by June 1.

While it may be too late to enter this year, this may well be a project homeowners, designers and contractors may be interested in entering in the future.

Projects must have been designed and/or installed within the past 5 years and must be submitted by the original designer, where he/she is a landscape architect, contractor or homeowner.

One set of landscape plans must be submitted.

Ten to twelve slides of the completed project must be submitted.

A summary of the project concept along with a clear description of the total landscape process, etc. must be submitted.

Finalists should be prepared to make a brief oral presentation at the conference.

For more information contact Natives Landscape Corporation, P.O. Box 2355, Covington, Louisiana, 70434.



**AGUA FRIA NURSERY, INC.**  
1409 Agua Fria  
Santa Fe, New Mexico  
87501

505-983-4831

Specializing in native plants  
and perennials

# CHAPTER REPORTS

## Otero Report

### Jarilla Mountains

Cactus nut Dee Umberson led us on a trip in the Jarilla Mountains 4/8/89. He furnished a sheet describing cacti that grow in this area where he has been going for at least 30 years watching the cactus sit there and hybridize. One statement he made is as follows:

"Let's enjoy them, photograph them, and keep their existence a secret. It would be a tragedy for commercial collectors to obliterate them."

We have been asked to participate in an endangered cactus survey and told that afterwards we should forget where they are. Signs of the time!!

Main cactus blossoms were seen on Echinocereus chloranthus var. chloranthus-usually solitary, up to 6" high, 2" diameter, central spines droop slightly, bright chartreuse flowers. Also Echinocereus polyacanthus var. rosei-this in shades of red, rose, pinks of different shades, orange, nearly white.

We saw many wildflowers; Gaillardia, desert marigold, verbena, Dalea formosa, yellow flax, fleabane, peppergrass, chocolate flower, and others. A complete list is available upon request from Jean Dodd, Otero Chapter contact. The spiny Condalia spathulata grows in this area but was not in bloom.

Jean

## Las Cruces Report

### Cox Ranch

Our field trip to the Cox Ranch was on a cool day with low clouds. The cholla and yucca were covered with ice and snow. There were no flowers out yet, except mustards. The ferns had leafed out and the moss was green. We explored around the old hotel ruins and enjoyed the

scenery. The flowing waterfall was very picturesque.

### B.L.M. Wilderness

Greg Magee discussed wilderness areas in southern New Mexico at our March meeting. Historically, wilderness was something to be subdued and conquered. This attitude changed with the Wilderness Act of 1964 which designated wilderness areas as places "untrammelled by man."

The Bureau of Land Management was not included in the original wilderness law, so now B.L.M. lands are being evaluated. An area must meet the following criteria to be considered for wilderness:

- 1) naturalness
- 2) opportunities for solitude and recreation
- 3) adequate size (minimum 5,000 acres)
- 4) supplemental values (not mandatory)

After explaining a little history of wilderness legislation, he showed us slides of areas that are now wilderness in southern New Mexico (White Mountain, Three Rivers, Leopold and Gila Wilderness Areas) and proposed wilderness areas (Blue Creek Canyon, Gila Lower Box, Cedar Mountains, Florida Mountains, Cooke's Range, West Potrillos, Mt. Riley, Aden Lava Flow, Robledo Mountains and Organ Mountains Wilderness Study Areas). Thanks Greg for the beautiful slide show.

### Jarilla Mountains

Our field trip on April 9 was to the Jarilla Mountains. There was not a lot of variety of species seen but the claret cup cacti were very numerous. These cacti were flowering and the colors were pink, red, orange and white (the normal color is scarlet). It was very beautiful. We don't know the reason for the many colors but we guessed that it was due to weather. Last year there was a cold snap which set

back the blooming on the claret cup cacti to coincide with Echinocereus cacti's blooming. This probably happens often enough to result in hybridization between the two species. Also flowering were Chihuahuan flax, bladderpods and Apache Plume.

### Snakeweed Research

Have you ever wondered about why snakeweed is so pervasive in New Mexico? Our questions were answered by Dave Richman at our April meeting. He has been involved with the biological control of woody snakeweed species at NMSU for many years. First of all, snakeweed (Gutierrezia) occurs in North America from California east to Texas and from central Mexico to Canada. It was thought to originate in Mexico. Snakeweed also occurs in South America mostly in Argentina and Chile (along with mesquite and creosote bush!). It is thought that this population originated from only one stray plant because all these seven species here highly polyploid.

Photos from the 1850's showed grasses as high as the horses's belly with snakeweed, creosote bush and mesquite in very restricted and discontinuous populations. Why is snakeweed so common now?

Overgrazing is one contributing factor. Photos from the 1890's show a very much overgrazed landscape. Snakeweed is an aggressive plant which almost magically occurs on broken ground. Snakeweed is unpalatable to livestock and contains saponins which cause cattle to abort. Another reason is the general trend toward dryness since the last ice age which may favor shrubs over grasses.

Snakeweed is not a permanent plant, however, because it has a life span of about seven years. If grass cover can be restored, it will limit future snakeweed establishment (although a snakeweed plant may produce up to 30,000 seeds/year). Another way to limit snakeweed is to burn it in the Spring after a rain. However, the area must have enough fuel to carry the fire. Biological control may also be a way to limit

snakeweed. Two beetle larvae species eat snakeweed roots, grasshoppers defoliate the plants, leaf hoppers and mealy bugs could be disease vectors, one beetle species eats flower buds and a few moths species are root and leaf boring. This subject is the focus of Dave Richman's research. His goal is to bring back the diverse flora and grass we had in the 1850's. We hope he achieves his goal!

Melanie

Gila

Our chapter volunteers have finished putting in the native plant gardens at the City Jail and at the Silver City Museum. Maintenance and regular watering chores are being arranged for.

In March, Prof. Terry Heiner, of WNMU, presented a program on plant propagation with demonstrations, slides and door prizes of Chihuahua Pine seedlings. Dr. Heiner gave a number of examples of fascinating ecological interactions. Our many thanks to Dr. Heiner for one of our finest programs and trooped away happily with our tiny pine forest.

### BEAR MOUNTAIN GUEST RANCH



Guided Tours :

Wildflowers, Birds,

Ghost Towns

Myra McCormick (505) 538-2538

Silver City, N.M. 88061

### A FESTIVAL OF HERBS

The Rio Grande Nature Center, located at 2901 Candelaria NW in Albuquerque, will host a Festival of Herbs on the weekend of June 24 and 25 at 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Herbal displays, refreshments, herb plants and handicrafts will be featured along with a spinning and dye workshop and demonstration by Las Aranas Spinners and Weavers Guild.

# CALENDAR

## Albuquerque:

May 3 "Maintenance of Native Landscapes" Albuquerque Museum, 2000 Mountain Rd. NW 7:30 p.m.

June to December will include an update on the future Albuquerque Botanic Garden, land reclamation efforts in New Mexico, Agaves, Composites, wreath making with native plant material, etc. Watch for details in the Sunday Albuquerque Journal "Happenings" section.

## Las Cruces

May 7 Field trip to Bishop's Cap, 8:00 a.m. at Pan Am Center parking lot.

May 10 Meeting. Bill Dunmire from Nature Conservancy, guest speaker. "Endangered Plants. 7:30 p.m. at Ag. Bldg. Room 190, NMSU

June 11 Fieldtrip to Kilbourne Hole-East Potrillos, 8:00 a.m.

June 14 Meeting. Melanie Florence on "The Influence of Geomorphology on Plants".

July 9 Fieldtrip to Black Range, Pot Luck Picnic, 7:00 a.m.

July 12 Meeting. Jan Meissner on "Designing with Native Plants".

## Gila

May 13 & May 21 Field trips to Bear Mtn. and Rain Creek.

May 24 Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Harlan Hall of Science, WNMU. Tom Wooten will be the speaker.

## Otero:

May 13 Plant Sale! Garden Center, corner of 10th and Oregon, across from the library. 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

May 27 Edible Native Potluck at noon. George and Ad Hanawalt home. Call for directions.

June 24 West Side Road trip (unless it rains). Meet at the Medical Facility in Cloudcroft at 9:00 a.m. Paul Gordon leading trip. Bring lunch.

July 29 Paul Gordon's trip to Capitan Mountains. Meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Smokey Bear Park in Capitan. Bring lunch.

## Santa Fe

Destinations have yet to be selected for May 21 and June 3 trips, but dates are firm. Meet at 8:00 a.m. P.E.R.A. parking lot, bring water and lunch.

June 18 Phyllis Hughes leading us to Cactus Hill. Please wear sturdy shoes; this trip will include both easy rambling and an optional short but rugged climb.

DROUGHT TOLERANT & NATIVE  
LANDSCAPE ORNAMENTALS



**BERNARDO BEACH NATIVE PLANT FARM**  
DESIGN & CONSULTATION  
520 MONJAÑO N.W.  
Albuquerque  
open 9 to 5 Tues., Thurs., Sat.

# LANDSCAPING WITH WILDFLOWERS

by Diane Wilson, Botanist,  
Applewood Seed Company  
(condensed from "Wildflower", March  
1989 )

The interest in and availability of wildflower seed has increased greatly in recent years. Unfortunately, there are numerous misconceptions about what constitutes the best mixtures to use and how to establish and maintain them properly.

For ornamental landscaping, first to insure you are getting the most for your money, buy wildflower seed that is high quality. Seed should meet state standards for germination, have high purity (over 95% desired seed), and contain no noxious weed seeds.

Many companies sell regionalized seed mixtures. The most desirable regionalized mixtures contain annuals and perennials which are either native or have naturalized in that region. Native/naturalized annuals are highly desirable because they provide color for long periods during the season and may reseed year after year if growing conditions permit.

Unfortunately, limited annual species exist in nature throughout most of North America. Notable exceptions include the regions west of the Sierra and Cascade Mountains and the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. For this reason, most seed companies offer regional mixtures that contain non-native or non-naturalized annuals. These annuals are essential in ornamental landscaping because they provide a colorful display the first year and act as a nurse crop for the slower developing perennials. Without the annuals, most perennials plantings will be overrun with weeds in the first season.

Also important in ornamental

landscaping are height restrictions. Because tall wildflower mixtures tend to look unkempt or too wild, low growing mixtures have been in great demand for suburban and urban settings. Mowing in the fall eliminates tall, dead flowering stalks and helps to disperse the seed. Very low-growing mixtures (10 inches or less) do not require fall mowing.

Approach a wildflower planting as you would a garden. Throwing seed out into an area with established vegetation rarely produces a flower meadow. Start with bare soil that has been tilled. Water the soil thoroughly, allow weed seeds to germinate, then spray them with glyphosate (Roundup or Kleenup). Rake out the dead debris. For added protection, repeat this procedure one more time, without tilling the soil again. If seed is broadcast, rake or drag the area lightly. For large areas, drilling or hydroseeding may be appropriate.

Moisture during the early stages is critical. Do not allow the seedbed to dry out for at least 4 to 6 weeks. To keep wildflowers at their peak, supplemental watering of up to 1/2 inch per week may be required, especially in hot, dry weather.

When weeds are a major problem, first spray existing vegetation with glyphosate. When vegetation is dead, use a slitseeder to sow seed directly into the dead debris. This method eliminates tilling the soil, which often brings many weed seeds up to the surface.

Until wildflowers are well established, weed control is important and may be an ongoing activity for at least two growing seasons. Once you can identify the weeds, cutting, spot-spraying and/or hand pulling weeds are effective ways to eliminate them.

## GRAY RANCH: TIME IS RUNNING OUT!!

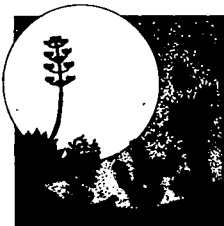
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has the opportunity to buy the Gray Ranch in Hildago County and establish the ranch as the Animas National Wildlife Refuge.

First, Congress must appropriate the money. Recent history indicates Republican administrations are against public lands and the current administration does not appear to be bucking the trend.

At stake is the Gray Ranch, a large tract (360,000 acre) that is truly an ecological treasure house. No other area within the U.S. contains this particular habitat.

Now is the time to let our senators and representatives know we support the acquisition by the Federal government. If funds are not provided this year, there is danger that the ranch will be subdivided, opened for mining and/or leased for heavy, destructive cattle grazing. The precious flora diversity would be forever lost in this country.

The main opposition to this measure seems to be coming from the cattle and mining industries. Now is the time to let your voice heard, contact our congressional delegation especially Senator Jeff Bingaman.



### DESERT MOON NURSERY

P.O. BOX 600  
VEGUITA, NEW MEXICO 87062  
(505) 864-0614

NATIVE PLANTS OF THE  
SOUTHWEST AND MEXICO

Specializing in Agaves, Yuccas and other Succulents

## CHAPTER CONTACTS

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

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

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

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

Silver City: Beck Smith, (538-5350)



### Regionalism: Landscaping with Natives

A recent issue of The Plant Press, Arizona Native Plant Society's newsletter had an article on regional landscaping by Karen Reichhardt and others. The comments made by Reichhardt bear consideration here in New Mexico.

While we advocate landscaping with drought tolerant plants, are we doing a disservice by also including drought tolerant exotics?

Granted our plant palette is a bit limited in some areas, but by including "foreigners" are we falling into another stereotypical landscaping. Are we trading the New England look with maples and lawns for Mediterranean Italian Cypress and olives?

Do we have a clear purpose when we talk about native plants in landscaping. Are we creating a "sense of place" using native plants or are we recreating the same designs but with different plant material?

Right now, both. Where are we headed? Where do you think we ought to go?

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Summary

The NPS Board of directors met April 16th at Bosque del Apache. The officers for 1989 are: Lisa Johnston, President; Bob Reeves, Vice President; Margaret Bradberry, Recording Secretary; Jean Dodd, Treasurer; Jean Heflin, Membership Secretary; Mimi Hubby and Michele Peters, Members at Large. Other chairmen include Susan Wachter, newsletter editor (to be replaced by Ellen Wilde); and Ted Hodoba, Conservation committee.

The Bosque del Apache project is progressing well, the meadow was planted and the remaining perennials will be planted later this year. Phase II will begin shortly and will include cooperating on education material (brochures, tour lists, etc.) and signs for the area.

The Conservation Committee will meet and develop policy statements on conservation issues and report back to the board. NPS by-laws will be reviewed for potential changes this summer. Anyone wishing to assist with this should contact Mimi Hubby in Santa Fe. There has also been some interest in sponsoring a landscaping contest. Ted Hodoba will research it.

We have the opportunity to host a Wildflower Photography workshop in Albuquerque area later in summer. To do this, we need someone to serve as local chairman to coordinate the event. If you are interested, please contact Lisa Johnston.

**NPS-NM election results are in.  
The following people comprise  
the NPS-NM Board:**

**President: Lisa Johnston  
831 W. 19th St.  
Portales, NM 88130**

**Vice President: Bob Reeves  
Record. Sec: Margaret Bradberry**

**Treasurer: Jean Dodd  
Membership Sec: Jean Heflin  
443 Live Oak Loop NE  
Albuquerque, 87122**

**Directors: Mimi Hubby  
Michele Peters**

**Conservation Chairman:  
Ted Hodoba  
P.O. BOX 600  
Yeguita, NM 87062**

**Newsletter Editor (beg. next issue)  
Ellen Wilde  
110 Calle Pinonero  
Santa Fe, NM 87505**

---

NPS-NM Editor  
2500 Norment Rd. SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87105

BULK RATE  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
Albuquerque, New Mexico  
PERMIT NO 633

