Native Plant Society of New Mexico

NEWSLETTER

MARCH / APRIL 1990 VOLUME XV, NUMBER 2

ALBUQUERQUE

March 7, Wed., 7:30 - Museum of Albuquerque, Program to be announced
April 4, Wed., 7:30 - Museum of Albuquerque, Program to be announced
Call Teresa Garwood, 242-8620

GILA

March 11, Sun., 12 Noon, Field trip to Granite Gap.
Leader: Bob O'Keefe, 388-5101
March 24, Sat., 9:00 a.m., Field trip to Allan Spring, Gila Ntl. Forest.
Leader: Gloria Maya, 388-3455
March 29, Thurs., 7:00 p.m., Meeting, A/V Dept., Miller Lib., WNMU.
April 22, Sun., 10:00 a.m., Gila River Bird Habitat below Bill Evans Lake. Leader: Deb Swetnam

LAS CRUCES

March 11, Sun., 9:00 a.m., Field Trip to Dona Ana Mtns.,
Meet at PanAm Bldg. North Lot.
March 14, Wed., 7:30 p.m., Ag Bldg., LAURA STACY slide show of Botanical Gardens.
April 8, Sun., Field Trip, Call Melanie Florence, 525-3529.
April 11, Wed., 7:30 p.m., Ag Bldg., Program to be announced.

OTERO

March 31, Sat., 10:00 a.m., Meeting at top of St. Augustine Pass with sturdy shoes and portable lunch. John Morton will lead caravan to Cox Ranch. Katie Skaggs will lead trip to Dripping Springs.
April 28, Sat., 9:00 a.m., Meet at south end of Holiday Inn, Alamogordo with lunch and water for field trip exploring canyons in Taylor Ranch area.
May 12, Sat., 9:00-1:00, PLANT SALE at Garden Center, 10th & Oregon, across from the Alamogordo Public Library.

SANTA FE

March 21, Wed., 7:30 p.m., St. John's Biology Lab, BEN HAGGARD, Landscape Designer, on Landscaping with Native Plants.
April 18, Wed., 7:30 p.m., PET TASCHL and DIANE MACFARLANE, U.S. Forest Service Biologists at Pecos Ranger Station, on Biological Diversity and New Mexico Range Ecosystems.

ALL

April 8, Sun., Board Meeting at Bosque del Apache
April 22, Sun., EARTH DAY. PLANT A TREE!
September 14, 15, 16. Fri., Sat., Sun., NMNPS State Meeting.

WELCOME!

NEW MEMBERS

ALBUQUERQUE
Elizabe h Bornholdt
Karen Darnall
Pamela Keeley
George Radnovich
Mark Rolfson
Wes'wind Gardens - Rio Rancho
Jose Luis Yguado - Bosque
OTERO
Charlotte Bagwell - La Luz
Jeanine Derby, Paul Shaw - Alamogordo
Herb and Sallie Hammond "
John and Joanne Stockert "
SANTA FE
Kathy Hagerman
Alice Peden
Maggie Rubino
William and Lynn Victor
Lacy Keil
OTHER
Deborah Benge - Odessa Tx.
Cathe Fish - Bisbee, Az.
John White - El Paso, Tx.

HELP!

PENSTEMON SEARCH

For those taking backcountry hikes this spring, please note:

We are looking for some penstemons of which we would like to get drawings in the field from New Mexico examples for a field guide to be published this year.

The species are: P. albidus (eastern New Mexico), P. breviculus (San Juan County), P. dasyphyllus (Hidalgo and Luna County), P. deaverii (Sierra County, high in Mogollon Mts.), P. lanceolatus (reported in Luna County and southern NM), P. lentus (San Juan County).

If you know of blooming populations of these plants in the wild, please call Erma Pilz, 296-7254 or Jean Heflin, 443 Live Oak Loop NE, Albuquerque, 87122, 291-0489.

BOOKS

The Help You Need!

Robert DeWitt Ivey has prepared a 10 page key, "The DYC's and Other Composites of New Mexico" If you would like a copy send $1.00 and a self-addressed, double stamped business size envelope to Robert DeWitt Ivey at 9311 Headingly Court N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87111.

Intermountain Flora Volume 3 Part B, The Fabales by Rupert Barneby is now available. Price $61.65. (Lisa may be able to get a better price if you inquire. Roger Peterson already has a copy at St. John's if you would like to see it.)

"A Sand County Almanac" is probably familiar to most of our readers, but to go deeper into the philosophy it holds, I heartily recommend the new biography, Aldo Leopold, His Life and Work, by Curt Meine. It is a large volume but very enjoyable reading. His family background, his school years, his courtship and marriage in New Mexico, his years with the U. S. Forest Service, the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute, and finally the University of Wisconsin all had a part in developing his land ethic. It is fascinating to follow the development of his thinking from boy hunter to land conservationist. Important quotations from his letters to his wife and family and to other members of the profession give a clear picture of the man and his ideas. The book is enhanced by photographs of Aldo and his family, their homes and friends. If you cherish "A Sand Country Almanac" you will not want to miss this and if you have not read it, you will have a deeper appreciation of it as you read it, which you cannot fail to do after reading the biography.

HURRAH!

Congratulations to the Nature Conservancy for the purchase of the Gray Ranch in Southwestern New Mexico! It is a wonderful achievement and I am sure that, as well as your thanks, they will appreciate your contributions toward the enormous cost. They have also recently purchased a 30,000 acre tract of tall grass prairie in Oklahoma and many smaller properties.

We applaud their efforts and support them completely, but the following articles suggest that the need is far beyond their capacity to preserve.

From the Canadian Plant Conservation Programme Newsletter

Endangered organisms per se cannot be preserved. Ecosystems in which organisms are interesting ingredients can however be preserved as long as the ecosphere of which they are parts continues to function in the old natural and healthy way. This realization turns attention more and more to the absolute necessity of preserving wildernesses and natural areas, ecological reserves and sanctuaries, endangered spaces before endangered species. Unless natural ecological systems are preserved, the native flora and fauna will not be preserved. Organisms will still exist in the truncated environments fashioned by people only as cultivars, zoo freaks, the living dead. Preserving a rare plant population in any but a temporary sense means preserving the rare ecosystem of which it is one component among others of equal importance. We will not save the riverine forests without protecting the floodplains, nor will the orchids be preserved without preserving the marshes. Our own fate is linked to the limits we set on domestication of the world around us, and to the offsetting effort we devote to maintaining the natural beauty and health of the creative, sustaining, enveloping Ecosphere.

From the Iowa Nature Conservancy News.

What is a Minimum Viable Population?

A thumbnail definition of minimum viable population threshold could be stated as that number of individuals which still display complete and characteristic interaction with all the influences of the normal habitat, and which do not display genetic degradation from loss of variability. Below that critical number, if conditions don't improve, the species will continue to decline until it disappears from the local environment.

Can the problem of minimum viable populations be overcome if the threshold is crossed? The jury is still out, but the costs of making such an attempt are very high indeed compared to the costs of protecting known natural habitat areas and existing populations.

The January/February issue of Sego Lily, the Newsletter of the Utah Native Plant Society, has several interesting articles concerning grazing. Pam Paulson, Chairman of the Board of UNPS, has studied grazing in Utah and reports that there is very little land in Utah that has not been overgrazed. (Ed. Note-Couldn't the same be said about New Mexico?) In a reprint from Earth First! Journal, Dec. 88, Katey Palmer has summarized many studies that point out the differences between the sagebrush/bunch grasslands of the Intermountain region and the sod-forming short grass prairies beyond the rain shadow of the Rocky Mountains. The sod-forming grasses coevolved with grazing mammals and can withstand a certain amount of grazing, while the bunchgrasses do not tiller and cannot restore themselves. Additionally, the cryptogram cover (mosses and lichens), which fills in between

the bunches, is very effective in preventing wind and water erosion, but is destroyed by the movement of large ungulates. This allows aliens such as cheatgrass and snakeweed to move in. She points out that researchers who attest to the positive effects of grazing on grasslands have invariably studied sod-forming grasslands, and furthermore that return to the climax vegetation after removal of the grazers does not occur on arid and semi-arid grasslands of the West without man's efforts for restoration.

Ranchers pay below market rates to run their cattle on federal land and the BLM budget has dropped so low that the agency can't afford to protect the land from abuse. Using federal statistics two environmental groups, National Wildlife Federation and the Natural Resources Defense Council, have concluded that 2/3 of the BLM range land is in unsatisfactory condition. BLM estimated that only about one-fifth of the total federal acreage was being improved. They did't even know the condition of about one-fourth of the land.

The Budget for the BLM dropped from 55.5 million dollars in 1981 to 34 million in 1988. Grazing fees bring in far less than the cost of range management and improvement.
(From a Jack Anderson column in Albuquerque Journal.)

Many endangered species exist on land belonging to the BLM. The Nature Conservancy can't buy all the areas containing endangered species in sufficient size to adequately protect them.

We can help them and applaud their efforts but basically the BLM and the Forest Service must have decent budgets to cope with the job they have been charged with of protecting the public lands and biological diversity. A new bill is working its way through committees in the U.S. Congress called "National Biological Diversity Conservation and Environmental Research Act. Let's show our interest and support for it also.

PLANT A SHRUB OR TREE IN HONOR OF EARTH DAY, APRIL 22.
Here's how from Bob Bickham, President, New Mexico Organic Growers' Association.

Late fall and early spring are the months when your shrubs and trees should really be rooting for you. Are your trees' roots growing laterally or downwardly or both? I hope it is "both" because between the extremes of the deep taproots of the Pecan (10 to 15 feet down), the Desert Hackberry (50 feet down), and the Mesquite (to 150 feet down!), and the surface roots of the Fruitless Mulberry, Willow family and Cottonwood are the root systems of the rest of the trees, which reveal a pattern of T's.

Of course, how and how often you water strongly influences how and how much your plants' roots will grow. Shallow watering with sprinklers will induce shallow-rootedness, just as deep soaking will help roots penetrate more deeply. Even Cottonwood roots, which may travel up to 75 feet in their insatiable quest for water, can be curbed by watering through 2- to 3- foot long pipes of 4- or 6-inch-diameter PVC placed around the tree about 4 feet away. In the forest the Colorado Blue Spruce is the tree least likely to be uprooted by a strong wind; in the urban landscape dominated by sprinklers, the same tree is the one most often blown down. So soak your trees at the dripline once a week in spring and fall and twice a week in 90 to 100 degree heat.

Roots of a newly planted shrub or tree will never venture beyond the original hole if the planter fills the hole only with a rich soil amendment like topsoil or peat moss. If the hole is not filled with any of the "native soil" beyond the planting hole, so as to make a transition zone between the rich potting soil inside the nursery container and the plain stuff in the ground, the roots may simply sing "Round and Round I Go" ("That Old Black Magic") as its swan song.

The most important part of the plant you buy in a nursery is the part you can't see--yes, the roots. If that nursery poured on the nitrogen in order to present a pleasing, very visible mass of twigs and leaves that is relatively large compared to the hidden root mass below, that plant may be doomed. And if the plant's new owner tries to hurry the growth with more plant food, he'll soon learn that speed kills. Instead of force-feeding chemicals to trees, causing an imbalance between what's above and below ground--thus causing the tree to grow itself to death--be patient.

Use seaweed, kelp, or other humus-producing substances that will get those micro-organisms working for you and the tree or shrub. Many of the trees in my landscape didn't appear to grow at all for two years, then suddenly grew 4 to 5 feet and increased their volume of leaves and twigs by one-third in just a month or two.

In this arid, high mountain desert climate the more you choose to adopt naturally deep-rooting plants, the less you will have to water. The 4 foot long roots of tall fescue and 8 foot long roots of Bermuda grass will survive without water much longer than the relatively shallow rooted Kentucky Blue Grass. And, once established, Chamisa and Buffalo Grasses will need little or no water at all. Plant water-conserving plants.

Finally, almost all roots need drainage except for Dogwood shrubs, Birches, and the Willow family; most plants don't like prolonged periods of "wet feet" any more than we do. Without drainage, roots rot. And don't water more than necessary. Only the the small root systems of annuals, vegetables and flowers may need daily watering. So in a nutshell, water deeply and thoroughly less often rather than a little every day.

If you follow these suggestions, your shrubs and trees will be rooting for the home team.

The New Mexico Organic Growers Association is one of the organizations we exchange publications with. Their monthly newsletter has much valuable information on species selection, insecticides, sources of organic soil amendments, etc. It may be had by joining the organization for Dues of $6.00. Write OGA, 701 Guadalupe Ct. N.W., Albuquerque 87114

MORE BOOKS

Conservation for the Twenty-first Century edited by David Western and Mary Pearl, 1989, is organized around four themes: 1) Tomorrows's World. The changes in human activity most likely to affect wildlife in the 21st century. 2) Conservation Biology. The biological basis of conserving nature and predicting the consequences of human action on species and ecosystems. 3) Conservation Management. Management approaches, tools, and techniques for conserving wildlife. 4) Conservation Realities. The measures required to gain support for wildlife conservation. The intended audience is the inquisitive and concerned individual, whether directly or indirectly involved in conservation, who has an interest in the future of our natural world (taken from the preface of this book). The book is available from Oxford University Press in hardcover for $36.95, ISBN 505-4741.

Dr. Gary Paul Nabham of the Desert Botanical Garden has a new book titled Enduring Seeds: Native American Agriculture and Wild Plant Conservation. The 225-page book sets the stage with chapters on loss of diversity and past efforts to conserve plant species, then moves on to "The Local Parables" of wild rice, sunflowers, gourds, and other plants and animals. Particularly interesting is a chapter on new and old ways of saving plants, including the work of botanical gardens. The book is published by North Point Press, San Francisco (1989) and is available in hard cover for $18.95.

Landscape Design for a Dry Climate

There are several grassroots movements aimed at more resource efficient landscaping. Permaculture is all-encompassing: the ideal is self-sustaining agriculture, food crops the primary concern, ornamental horticulture a secondary issue. The design approach as described in "Sustainable Living In Drylands", the permaculture journal, is to "meet human needs through a practical use of space that compliments local ecology....without meddlesome, combatative or egotistical effort." Amen brothers and sisters! Landscapes should be living spaces designed to take advantage of climatic pluses and buffer climatic minuses. Landscapes should be variations on the theme of local ecology, not battlefronts where the gardener naively struggles to grow plants that would rather be in England (and not just in the merrie month of May). Taming the wild is certainly an egotistical endeavor, and costly considering that what we tame we must care for intensively, 'til death do us part.

The southwest's natural landscape evolved in response to lack of rainfall. Xeriscape, "water conservation through creative landscaping," is a concentrated effort to reduce the amount of water wasted in ornamental gardens. Up to 50% of water used residentially is poured on our gardens. More fertilizers, insecticides and herbicides are used by home gardeners than by farmers. Xeriscape promotes planning and design utilizing climate adapted plants, limited or alternative turf areas, mulches and efficient irrigation to reduce water use while enhancing the quality of the landscape.

What both these movements advocate is common sense, and, since common sense has never been commonly accepted, their founders coined terms that they hoped would give people a focus for action. Folks tired of explaining that Permaculture isn't a New Age agricultural religion, and Xeriscape isn't zeroscape, a ho-hum garden vacuum, call this uncommon sense "landscape ecology", acknowledging that we are part of the local ecology, not its conquerors. We seem to have gotten the Homo part down pat, homogenizing the landscape until we can't distinguish New Mexico from Kentucky, so now let's take a stab at the sapiens part. It takes a little planning.

First consider the big picture:
Mesa, grassland, foothills, bosque or urban community, the ecosystem we are part of and planning to retain, restore or enhance;
The network of wildlife habitats, fragmented preserves and corridors that we want to become a link in, growing by participation.

Narrow the focus to consider the character of the site being landscaped:
Exposures to sun and wind
Contours, slopes and swales, soil type
Views
Structures, paving and utilities
Current uses and future additions or alterations
Traffic patterns on site for definition and off site for buffering

Superimposed on these conditions are the human concerns:

Privacy	Allergies
Shade	Pets
Wind protection	Budget

Active and passive uses
Color and fragrance preferences
Preferred type and amount of maintenance

There is no free lunch, but there are ways to economize. An attractive, functional landscape can cost up to 10% of the cost of the site and structure if planted for immediate effect by competent professionals. (It can cost even more for a non-functional landscape.) The cost can be substantially reduced by:
- disturbing the site as little as possible during construction;
- opting for porous paving as part of a zero runoff plan where practical;
- starting with young transplants and seed, limiting large specimen plants to slow growing species;
- phasing construction;
- doing as much of the work yourself as possible.

An unmaintained landscape will look messy, but a landscape designed to minimize maintenance may require only periodic watering and clean up/pruning to keep it at its prime. Further savings are realized as the landscape matures to near self-sufficiency. A well-designed landscape costs less in time and resources as it matures.

Maintenance can be minimized by:
- zoning plants by moisture requirements
- spacing plants to accommodate their mature sizes to avoid subsequent shrink-to-fit pruning or removal
- avoiding shearing as a pruning technique
- avoiding mono-cultures and design styles emphasizing symmetry or uniformity
- selecting plants well-suited to the site, to each other, and to their role in the community.

Once the physical framework is in place--preferably on paper with an eraser in reach--, the site is subdivided into "outdoor rooms" by use, grade changes to allow water harvesting, shade structures, patios, pathways noted, plants can be selected to fulfill specified roles in the landscape: trees and vines for shade, wind protection, screening, barriers, erosion control, wildlife habitat and ornament (form, color and texture); shrubs for wind protection and enclosure, screening, barriers, erosion control, habitat and ornament; wildflowers and grasses for carpeting/groundcover/understory, bedding, erosion control, habitat and ornament

Functional uses involve size, form and density. Specific plant selections correlate those characteristics with individual plant adaptations. Draw on natural plant associations for compatible combinations. Tour ecologically sound gardens, talk to gardeners and commercial growers. The better you know your site and well-adapted plants, the more appropriate your choices will be.

Finally engage in a bit of attitude adjustment. Consider your landscape a dynamic process rather than a project to begin and end. Enjoy yourself.

Judith Phillips

CHAPTER REPORTS

Gila

Despite the threat of snowy roads we had an excellent turnout for our field trip to the Gray Ranch and Peloncillo mountains on January 20th. People from as far away as Minnesota (they happened to be visiting in the area) as well as three cars full of people from the Las Cruces Chapter joined about fifteen of our group on this excursion. Our first stop was on the mesa above the Animas Valley where we had a panoramic view of the western one third of the Gray Ranch including the Animas Mountains. The dusting of snow on the mountains made the view better than ever. Little did we know that within a week this enormous acreage would be under the protection of the Nature Conservancy. After this brief stop we continued up Clanton Draw into the Peloncillos. We had our lunch along the road near a nice grove of Chihuahuan Pine. A few hardy souls hiked through the pockets of snow to a south facing rock outcropping. Among the ocotillo were three species of ferns (Pellaea longimucronta, Notholaena sinuata, and N. Standleyii) and an unknown species of cactus.

Our regular monthly meeting was held at the Public Library on Thursday, January 25th. Our chairman, Bob O'Keefe, gave an excellent talk about Antarctica. Bob spent the summer of '74-'75 working at the South Pole and shared many fine slides with us. We learned that it is a continent of extremes. Most of Antarctica could be considered a frozen desert. The South Pole receives only two inches of snow per year on average but it never melts. The all time high is only 7½ degrees above 0. Therefore it keeps building year after year and compressing into ice until now the land there is covered with 9000 feet of ice. (No this isn't a typo) For more information about this continent and particularly man's effect (read abuse) of it, there is an excellent article in the January 15th, 1990 issue of Time magazine.

Ron Flemke

Santa Fe

We had a nice turn-out for our January meeting, the weather happened to be most agreeable. Our speaker was Sam Hitt, Forest Ecologist and activist. He opened with some comments about one reason for the decline of the Roman Civilization. Their drinking water was contaminated from flowing through lead pipes resulting in lead poisoning. This problem they were not able to identify. One advantage that today's civilization has is that we are able to identify environmental threats and problems by means of our advanced technology. We know that unleaded gas helps to keep our air clean; we are able to thoroughly test drugs that could prove to be harmful, such as thalidomide; also, the use of dangerous pesticides can be restricted or eliminated.

We have a bad tendency to look only at the temporary effect of something and not look ahead to the long-term effect. The long-term viability of plants seems to be ignored at present. We must maintain large populations of plant species for long-term viability and establish gene pools to keep species going. He stressed that micro-populations of plants and animals must not be sacrificed for some temporary whim or fancy. Every species has a right to exist as an essential part of the environment.

The only piece of legislation for the environment that has teeth to it is the Endangered Species Act. This came into being in December 1973 while Richard Nixon was in office.

Plants are not getting the protection they deserve. We need to watchdog and lobby not only for Endangered Species but for others that could be threatened by excessive timber cutting, etc. Our forests are over-cut; what is presently going on in the Jemez Mtns. is practically clear-cutting. Corridors and buffer zones must be left for plants to survive.

Only 30% of Endangered Species have some sort of recovery plan; implementation of these plans seems to be lacking.

In closing, he urged our members to become active letter-writers and whenever possible attend meetings that concern environmental issues. We must stand up and be heard! He also recommended Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold as a "must" reading.

Thank you, Sam.

Iris

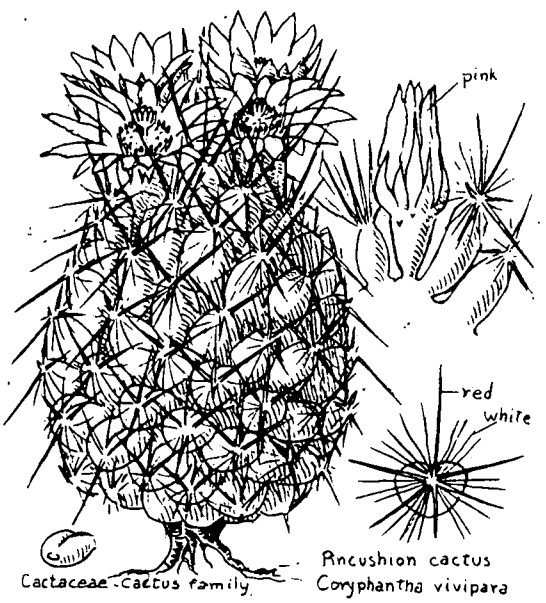
Albuquerque

Appropriately enough we started the New Year with something different at our January meeting. Celeste Brozek showed us slides from his native Poland, and what a gorgeous collection of pictures it was: views of the ancient royal city of Krakow, of the rain shrouded Tatra Mountains, of deep fairy-tale forests, succulent mushrooms, fleet footed chamois and meadows just covered with blossoms in a riot of colors. Many of these wildflowers have their counterparts in our own mountains, like the Bellflowers, Ox-eye Daisies, Gentians, Thistles and Orchids. But we also got acquainted with new species such as Wild Crocus, Ragged Robin and the delicate Soldanella.

Those of us who attended the February meeting were in for a big surprise and a special treat: a poetry reading no less! Our own Sandra Lynn, author, teacher and poet showed slides from the Big Bend Country in Texas and gave us a sample of her poems from the book Where Rainbows Wait for Rain. The pictures were a feast for the eyes and her readings a delight for the soul. Sandra spoke of Juniper snags that 'snag the star-red sky', of 'the white flank of the solitario', a rainbow cactus 'a small crooked hedge-hog, one foot under a stone', Laguna Meadow-with 'grass in soft snatches blond as a child's hair springing up at the peak of his head! It was an evening we'll remember for a long time to come.

Walt

WHERE RAINBOWS WAIT FOR RAIN: THE BIG BEND COUNTRY by Sandra Lynn and Richard M. Fenker Jr. is now available all over the state for those of you who looked for it before and could not find it. A recent review, "--reflects the stark beauty of the Big Bend Country like moonlight on a desert pool. An exploration of the Chihuahuan Desert's rough charms, a portfolio of spectral photographs, a collection of powerful poems, a triumph of the bookmaker's art, this is in every way a superlative book." Tangram Press $45.00.



TO SQUASH OR NOT TO SQUASH...

Ann C. Cooper

The only sure way to identify a plant is to have a specimen of the plant in hand as you toil through the key. This specimen should be complete. That means digging up (that's destroying) the plant in question to get roots, and probably going back later in the season to get samples of the plant in fruit. This is all very well for professional botanists who have the justification (and permission) to collect. But for many interested amateurs collecting is not an option.

Suppose you do collect, there are many places that are off limits to plant vandalism of this type. Even if your goal is to try and remember the most common of the wild flowers, and you have vowed not to dig and squash anything rare, you are limited to collecting on private land (with permission) or the occasional roadside. Keep your acquisitive hands firmly in your pockets as you walk through national, state, county, and city parks and wildlife areas!

This dilemma is compounded when you try to learn someone else's natives. Outside of the United States collecting is extremely difficult for an amateur, from the point of view of customs and immigration if nothing else.

So what can you do to first identify and then remember the plants you learn?

I resort to carting a library of books with me. I often sit and identify the plants where they grow. If the key wants to know about roots, I rely on inspired guesswork! Once I've managed to put a name to a plant, I use a combination of photography and sketching to impress the detail on my forgetful botany-brain.

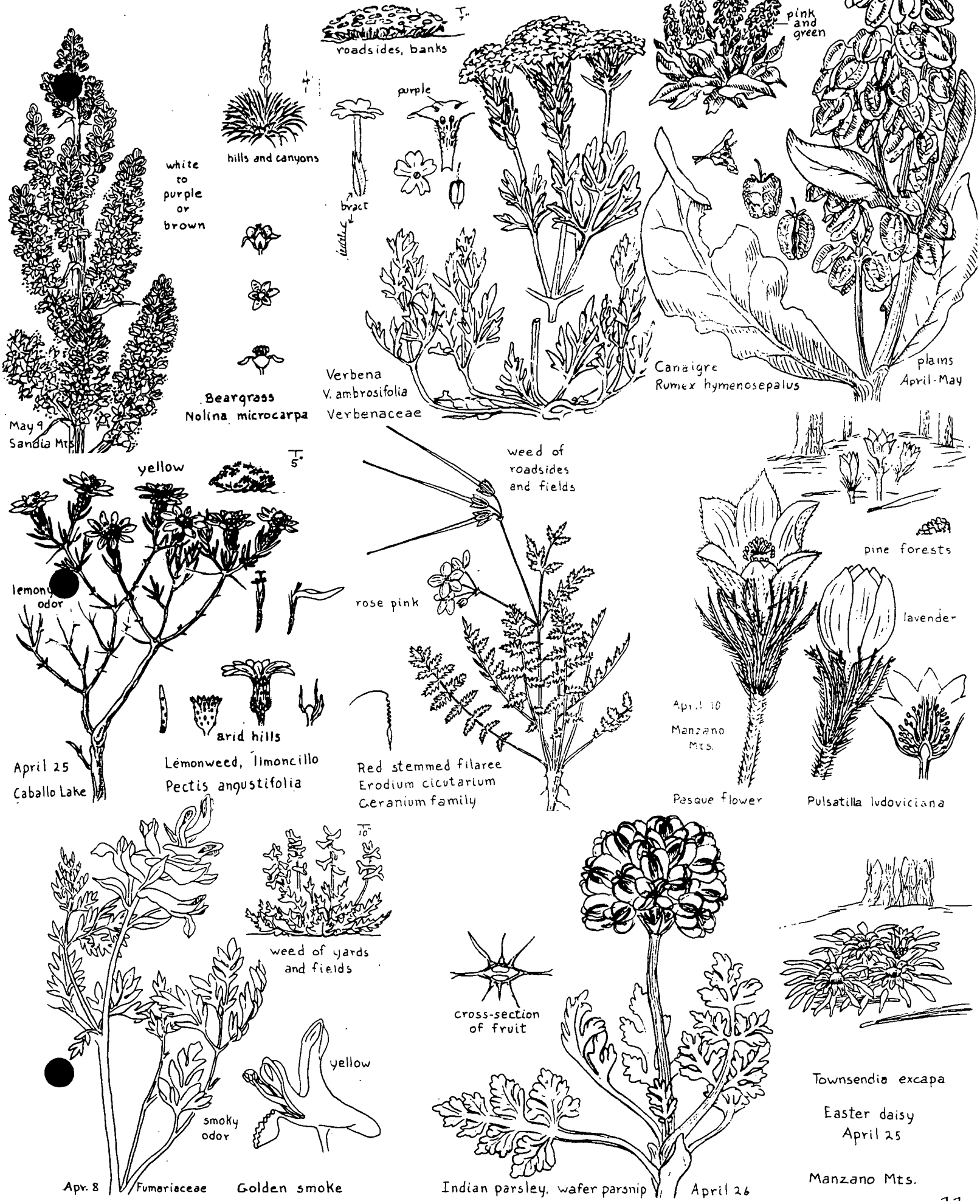
Photography has its pitfalls. You can put that cent, or pen, or rule in as a scale. But if you do, that slide or print will be worthless if you fancy entering any contests for pretty-pics. Various techniques can enhance the pictorial quality of your work, but they may not improve your chances of seeing the features that differentiate the plant from other similar species. For me, the best combination of slides by which to remember a flower includes a full-plant picture to show growth form and one or two close-ups to show the features used in keying. I swear by my 35 mm wide angle and 50 mm macro lense.

It is hard to avoid clutter in flower pictures. Even with a little judicious "gardening" of litter and grass stems around your subject, green will merge with green. Creative lighting will often help. Try back-light, or two fill-in flashes, or a cardboard or foil backing to bounce light. Creative angles will improve the balance of flower to background. Belly-photography can produce shots of flowers against a vivid, Kodacolor sky, though this may make a two-foot Phacelia tower like a tree! If you have a choice, choose the clump of flowers that is backed by a rock angle, or different colored substrate. Select flowers that grow next to contrasting color-early fall reds or bronzes, or silvery sage.

Sketching also has its pitfalls, not least a total lack of art training in my case! But never mind, it's worth a try, and can convey different information about the plant under study. The single, most valuable thing about sketching a plant, however simple the results may be, is that you are forced to look at it very carefully. My self-imposed rule is no fudging! You cannot draw what you cannot see! This becomes an excellent aide-memoir. By the time you have painfully and laboriously inked a plant portrait, you know that plant intimately!

The above article is from Aquilegia, the Colorado Native Plant Society Newsletter.

EARLIEST FLOWERS TO LOOK FOR!!



CONTACTS :

ALBUQUERQUE
Ted Hodoba 864-- 0614
Teresa Garwood 242-8620

LAS CRUCES
Melanie Florence 525-3529
Tom Wootten 522-8068

OTERO
Jean Dodd 434-3041
Margaret Bradberry 682-2429

SANTA FE
Mimi Hubby 983- 1658
Phyllis Hughes 983-4875

GILA
Bob O'Keefe 388-5101
Ron Flemke 538- 3498

Again, thanks to helpers Phyllis Hughes and Aurora Sanchez-Baca, to Robert Dewitt Ivey for his wonderful drawings from FLOWERING PLANTS OF NEW MEXICO, to all the contributors. Having so much to select from makes editing the newsletter an easy job.

The deadline to get material in for the next edition will be April 13. Please write!

Editor: Ellen Wilde 982-1406
110 Calle Pinonero
Santa Fe, N. M. 87505

Join the Native Plant Society of New Mexico if you are not already a member! Send dues of $8.00 for an individual or couple or $25.00 for a sustaining membership to NPS-NM, PO Box 5917, Santa Fe, NM 87502. Welcome!

Lisa Johnston, Pres.

NPS-NM
P. O. Box 5917
Santa Fe, N.M. 87502

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Santa Fe, N. M. 87501
PERMIT # 239