



NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

July/August 1994

Volume XIX Number 4

THE DOOLITTLE RANCH A PREVIEW OF THE NPS STATE MEETING

Barbara Doolittle, with a ready smile and gracious manner, met us at her ranch outside of Watrous in May. The same smile and generous hospitality awaits the Native Plant Society on 27 August when we gather for our Annual State Meeting in Las Vegas, New Mexico. The Doolittle Ranch is steeped in history. It is one of the premier ranches in Mora County and the land is extensive, diverse and beautiful.

The ranch has supported cattle since New Mexico was a territory and has been a working cattle ranch, in one way or another, ever since. In the early 1840's a prominent rancher, Samuel B. Watrous, bought the ranch and in 1849 a portion of the existing ranch house

access to the riparian areas is restricted but for the movement from one pasture to another. On 27 August, you can judge the impact of the cattle for yourself and I am sure there will be grounds for some healthy debate.

We will have more generous latitude than the cattle. The meadows, scrub chaparral, pine forests, and riparian areas are all available in a walk suited to any pace. Two rivers run through the ranch. The Mora River is to the south and to the north is Wolf Creek, as named on the map but locally called Coyote Creek. In fact, I was first introduced to this beautiful riparian area as Dog Creek. Regardless of its true canine namesake, there are a wide variety of water loving



was constructed. A part of the present and much larger house just might be under reconstruction when we visit in August, but the historical charm could never be diminished. During the Civil War the ranch supplied beef to Fort Union. Harry Myers, historian and Superintendent of Fort Union National Monument, will be with us to complete this historical picture with a tour of the Doolittle Ranch House.

At present a small number of cattle are confined to about 5,000 acres. They move to a different pasture every few days and their

plants including *Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum* (Watercress), *Ranunculus* sp. (Buttercup) and *Mimulus* sp. (Monkey Flower). Meadow areas are covered with grasses and sedges. During our May visit we found in bloom *Astragalus*, *Erigeron*, *Eriogonum*, *Castilleja*, *Townsendia* and *Verbena* to mention only a few species. In August we should find a very colourful display. The Ponderosa and Pinon/Juniper forests are set in moss rock outcroppings on one side of the creek and on the other side is the chaparral of *Quercus*, *Rhus*, *Fallugia paradoxa* . . . and the list goes on.

This rich diversity promises not only many plants in bloom for our August trip, but a wealth of birds, butterflies, and possibly mushrooms. Our visit to the Doolittle Ranch will include a contingent of botanists, mycologists, lepidopterists, and ornithologists. Also complementing the morning walk will be a lunch in the historic courtyard of Barbara Doolittle's ranch house.

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N. Daniel

NEWS RELEASE

Two back-to-back conferences for arborists, landscape designers and others in the greens industries are planned for January, 1995, in Albuquerque, NM.

A one-day conference deals with pollen allergy and landscaping, and a second conference deals with tree care, tree biology and related topics.

The Pollen-Allergy Landscape Conference will be Jan. 25 (Wednesday). It will focus on pollen allergies, pollinating trees and topics related to landscaping and hay fever.

Dr. Alex Shigo Durham, NH, noted arborist, will be the keynote speaker at Think Trees, Jan. 26-28 (Thursday through Saturday).

The conference will include lectures by Shigo and other experts. Also offered will be a hands-on tree biology workshop.

For a brochure, send a self-addressed stamped (business size) envelope to Think Trees/Pollen Conference, c/o Extension Service, 1510 Menaul NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107. The brochure will be ready in November.

Many thanks to Robert Dewitt Ivey for permission to use his wonderful drawings from *Flowering Plants of New Mexico*, second edition, in our *Newsletter*.



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The Newsletter is published six times per year by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The Society is composed of professional and amateur botanists and others with an interest in the flora of New Mexico.

Articles from the Newsletter may be reprinted if fully cited to author and attributed to the Newsletter.

Membership in the Native Plant Society of New Mexico is open to anyone supporting our goals. We are dedicated to promoting a greater appreciation of native plants and their environment, and to the preservation of endangered species.

Members benefit from chapter meetings, field trips, publications, plant and seed exchanges and a wide selection of books available at discount.

We encourage the use of suitable native plants in landscaping to preserve the state's unique character and as a water conservation measure.

We maintain a register of business and professional people who are members and can supply information and services related to native plants. To be added to this roster or to request information, contact the Membership Secretary.

Advertising Schedule

Approved advertisements will cost \$40 per year.

Schedule of Membership Fees

Dues are \$10.00 annually for individuals or families. "Friends of the Society" include organizations, businesses, and individuals, whose dues of \$25.00 or more provide support for long range goals. To join us, send your dues to Membership Secretary, 443 Live Oak Loop NE, Albuquerque, NM 87122

Newsletter Contributions

Please direct all contributions for the newsletter to Tim McKimmie, editor. See address below or email to tmckimmi@lib.nmsu.edu
Deadline for the next newsletter is August 1.

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See above for membership and newsletter correspondence.

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Colorado Native Flora and The Public Lands Grazing Reform Debate

by Tim Hogan

reprinted from *Aquiegia* 18(1):6, 1994.

The issue of public lands grazing has moved onto the front pages of many Colorado papers in recent months. It started this autumn with a filibuster by Western Senators, including Hank Brown and Ben Nighthorse Campbell, over an attempt by the Department of the Interior to raise grazing fees on public lands. The coverage has continued, as a series of meetings called by Secretary Bruce Babbitt have taken place across the state in an attempt to resolve this contentious issue.

Unfortunately, there has been a lack of insight with which the media have been covering the discussion of grazing on public lands. The coverage has focused on economics and an adversarial scenario in which ranchers' culture and livelihood are threatened by elite urban preservationists who don't eat beef. There has been little attention paid to the fundamental reason that public land grazing is opposed by many in the environmental community. The reason is not a balanced budget or an antipathy for ranchers, but rather the indisputable evidence of what cattle and sheep have done to the native ecosystems of western North America. The ecological integrity of countless mountain meadows, dry uplands, and riparian zones has been devastated by poorly managed livestock grazing over the last century. Natural communities and native species have been altered or extirpated from portions of their ranges. Predators have been trapped, shot, and burned. A great silence hangs over a world that was once rich in its diversity of plants and animals. The reason the ranching industry is being asked to reform its practices on public lands is because it has acted without individual or collective restraint.

The General Accounting Office (the investigative arm of Congress) has issued a series of reports on public lands grazing and its effects on land and wildlife. The G.A.O. found that public lands were overgrazed (1989), that cattle were given preference over wildlife (1989, 1991), that there was no land management (1990), and that grazing of excess numbers of livestock was common (1990). The 1991 report documented conditions so bad that the G.A.O. recommended Congress halting all livestock grazing on 20 million acres of arid lands in five states. A 1990 document from the Environmental Protection Agency discloses that riparian areas in the West are in the "worst condition in history," while the G.A.O. reports that grazing is a principle agent in the degradation of Western riparian areas. This is not surprising given the fact that 2,500 gallons of

water are required for each pound of beef produced in the arid and semi-arid West. The ecological degradation is all the more senseless considering that 260 million acres of public land— an area equivalent in size to the combined eastern seaboard states, from Maine to Florida— are open to grazing, yet these lands produce less than 3 percent of all U.S. beef. The State of Vermont raises more beef than Nevada!

It is important to remember that the subject of reform addresses public lands: lands that are held in trust for all Americans. Grazing interests have argued that changes will threaten the livelihood of small ranchers, yet the largest permit holders, the top 10 percent, control about half of the nation's public grazing lands, according to Interior Department figures. Only 12 percent of the permit holders are listed by the government as small operators. Among the largest permittees are the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, the Mormon Church, the Zenichiku Corporation (a Japanese conglomerate) and Hewlett Packard.

While an increase in grazing fees is necessary, it is only one step toward a thorough reform of the way our public lands are managed. The recent events in the Senate have demonstrated the deep entrenchment of livestock interests. In Colorado, where less than one-tenth of one percent of the population holds a public lands grazing permit, almost every county commission has at least one rancher member, more ranchers sit in the state legislature than lawyers, the governor grew up on a ranch, three out of eight state Wildlife Commissioners are ranchers, and one of our two federal senators is a rancher.

Members of the Colorado Native Plant Society are in a good position to lend their shoulder to the wheel of change that is attempting to reform grazing policies on our public lands. There are few of our members who have not witnessed first hand the effect that cattle and sheep have had upon our native flora. From the alpine meadows of the San Juans to the grasslands of the Pawnee, we have bemoaned the impact of livestock as we have explored Colorado on Society field trips and on our personal excursions. It is essential that we inform ourselves about the issue, persuade our representatives to support the protection of native plant and animal diversity, write letters to our local papers, and use our botanical expertise to offer testimony at public hearings.

Far too often, the effect of cattle and sheep on the ecosystems of western North America has been one of compromise, loss, and ruin. Aldo Leopold said that to see with the eyes of an ecologist is to "live in a world of wounds." It is important that the abuses to which our public lands have been subjected are stopped, and that a program of restoration is initiated that will begin the healing of these wounds.

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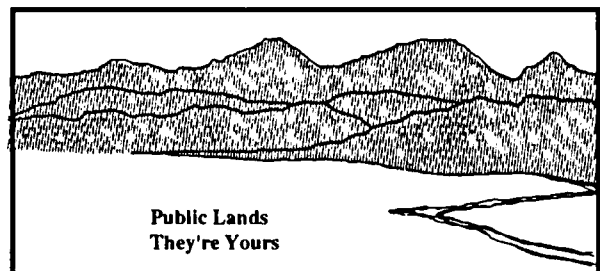
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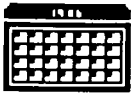
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CALENDAR

OTERO

July 16 Field trip to Capitan Mountains with Paul Gordon. 10 am at Smokey Bear State Park in Capitan. We'll look for a special Penstemon.

August 18-20 Otero County Fair.

August 26-28 NPS Annual Meeting. Las Vegas, NM.

Sept. 3-5 Cottonwood Festival, Alameda Park.

LAS CRUCES

*** NOTE MEETING LOCATION CHANGE ***

July 13 "Penstemons" by Jean Heflin. 7:30 pm. Dona Ana Branch, Rm 106, call Alice 523-5179 or Tim 524-0401

July 17 Field trip to Aguirre Springs. 8 am. Pan Am Center lot.

July 31 Home tour and potluck TBA

August 10 "Mosses" by Tom Todsén. 7:30 pm. Dona Ana Branch, Rm 106

August 14 Field trip to Blue Mesa. 8 am. Pan Am Center lot.

August 26-28 NPS Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NM.

ALBUQUERQUE

August 4 "Basic Botany" by Carolyn Dodson. 7:30 pm. Albuquerque Garden Center.

August 20-21. Plant Sale. TBA. Ted Hodoba.

August 26-28 NPS Annual Meeting. Las Vegas, NM

September 1 "Constructed Wetlands" by Russ Coleman. 7:30 pm Albuquerque Garden Center.

GILA

July 10 Field trip to Georgetown area. 9 am. WNMU Fine Arts lot.

August 14 Field trip to Mogollon Mountains. 8 am. WNMU Fine Arts.

August 26-28 NPS Annual Meeting. Las Vegas, NM.

SANTA FE

July 9 Third annual Santa Fe Butterfly count. 7:30 am. West PERA lot, across from Capitol Bldg.

July 23 Trip to Pecos Wilderness. 8 am, PERA or 9am Las Vegas Roundhouse on Highway 85.

August 6 Field trip to estate adjacent to "Garden of the Gods". 9 am PERA or 9:30 Hwy 14 turn off to "Garden".

August 10 Doolittle Ranch call 988-9141.

August 26-28 Host NPS Annual Meeting. Las Vegas, NM

Views from the South

(One Member's Views)

by Tom Wootten

When this article reaches you, the latest round of public hearings on "Grazing Reform" will be over. I hope at least some of you were present to offer your ideas. This said, I am unable to criticize anyone who preferred to stay away in as much as you would need to take off from work to attend what have become extremely unpleasant and polarizing meetings. I know personally I am being driven more and more towards a hard line stance in as much as the livestock industry, at least officially, has shown a complete unwillingness to compromise or recognize a changing world.

I do encourage all to forward written comments on the greatly weakened proposals lest they become even weaker. Copies of the "Reform" proposals are available at BLM offices. Comments should be sent to:

Rangeland Reform
Bureau of Land Management
Box 66300
Washington, DC 20035-6300

Comments I suggest are, criticism that the proposals still do not address suitability of areas to be grazed. The assumption and current rule is that virtually all BLM managed land will be grazed by livestock regardless of other values or the ecological condition

of the land. Some areas should exclude grazing because of the damage being caused to the watershed, to critical populations of plant or animal species, or because it is leading to outright desertification. Many people feel that livestock should be excluded from wilderness areas and National Wildlife Refuges as well.

Secondly, the reform package should include minimum uniform standards and guidelines to ensure environmentally sound grazing practices are implemented nationwide.

Fees ought to be brought up to fair market value. The current proposal is far from this and the assumed final step to \$3.96 per animal unit month will probably never be reached, since it is dependent on creation of an incentive program.

The proposed new advisory councils should be designated on an experimental basis only. They should be eliminated if they do not work effectively. Past experience shows that committees such as these are subject to extreme political manipulation.

The proposal to eliminate the current Grazing Advisory Boards is constructive, as are the proposals to retain Federal ownership of improvements and water developments on public lands financed with public funds.

Written comments will be accepted through **July 28, 1994**.



CHAPTER REPORTS

Otero-Jean Dodd

Roger Peterson of St. John's College in Santa Fe showed slides that gave us some idea of San Andres Canyon south of Alamogordo and what plants we might see. The first mile in the canyon is managed by BLM and the next two miles are in the Lincoln National Forest. Roger had prepared a plant inventory from his records of visits to the canyon in 1993. The types of plants found ranged from desert scrub to riparian flora to mixed woodland.

On Saturday 4-23-94 the canyon was very dry. Although a few *Penstemon alamosensis* were found in the first group of yuccas, they were not in their usual places along the north facing slopes. We saw one bedraggled blossom on a *Hibiscus denudatus* when ordinarily they bloom all up and down the canyon. We did see clumps of cheery yellow *Chrysactinia mexicana* and the pink, tiny *Stenandrium barbatum*. Red *Salvia henryi* and *Polygala* were in bloom. One of our favorite plants-the Mexican Orange, *Choisya dumosa*-was in bloom as was the Apache Plume which grow to be enormous in the canyons along the washes. Dee Umberson came along to help with the identification of the cactus. *Epithelantha micromeris* is the little button cactus we see along the trail with the bright red fruit. It is worth the whole trip to sit eating your lunch in this canyon admiring the view and the clusters of Faxon yucca, a giant dagger with beautiful, fluffy, white flower heads. According to Warnock some of these plants easily weigh 2000 pounds.

5-21-94 John & Beth Anne Gordon invited Otero to take a field trip near their house in Lower Cottonwood Canyon outside of LaLuz. John led the trip, Beth Anne furnished lunch, and members brought the desserts. John led us along trails with the rows and rows of hills in the distance. Also to Labracita Creek at the waterfall. Along the way we saw little leaf sumac in full flower and large clumps of bear gras. We saw many of the same plants we had seen in the San Andres, Yellow bladderpod, *Dalea formosa*, *Leucelene ericoides*, bi-colored mustard (*Nerisyrenia camporum*), and *Chrysactinia mexicana*. The character of the land changed somewhat as we came to a number of small desert willows before arriving at the waterfall where growth flourished at the sides and bottom. Yellow blossoms of possibly *Sandclappia-Pseudoclappia arenaria* (Warnock-Guadalupes p. 146-7) were the dominant plant that day. Back at the house hungry and thirsty hikers enjoyed not only a buffet of wonderful food but the way the owner-designed house suited the occasion with long counters for all the food, plenty of sitting space, and windows placed for year round enjoyment of the outside plants and wildlife. The whole day was for learning including how you build a house in the boondocks, how it fits with the environment, how the environment was preserved, the solar and other features that more of us should be using.

Albuquerque - Lu Bennett

Our February presentation was by Teresa Prendusi, Regional Botanist of the U. S. Forest Service. She has many good ideas for teaching wildflower identification as part of the Federal program, "Celebrate Wildflowers." Coloring books and various field guides are some possibilities for projects to aid in wildflower identification.

In March, George Radnovich, landscape architect with Bohannon Houston, presented a guide to landscape design emphasizing the need to conserve water and landscape with low water needs. The drainage plan should use water harvesting techniques including soil imprinting, sheet drainage, swales, dams and ponds. Using existing vegetation, zoning plants and using drought tolerant plants are key elements in the landscape design.

At the regular April meeting, Holly Baer of Zomeworks in Albuquerque and Bruce Davis, an Albuquerque landscape designer, showed architecture and landscape design that will reduce energy costs. Shading from the outside is very effective. Zomeworks produces solar electric or photovoltaic panels that are a cost effective means of providing electricity.

Wildlife West Nature Park in Edgewood, New Mexico was the subject of our May meeting. Linda Maloney presented its current attractions as well as the future plans. It is open Thursday through Saturday until October 9, 1994. It features a Living Parking Lot which is a demonstration project for the Edgewood Soil Conservation District. Other features are a constructed wetlands area, an Observation and Education Center, a Wild Bird Walk Nature Trail, a 15 acre wetlands area, and an open large trail ride of 100 acres.

Las Cruces-Paul & Betty Shelford

4-13-94 NMSU Biology Dept. Head Richard Spellenberg spoke about his trip to SW Australia, one of the world's most unique plant provinces. He provided interesting background information on the area's geologic and evolutionary history. From Perth he traveled an area roughly the size of New Mexico. The area is isolated from the rest of Australia by sea and by deserts. Of its more than 3000 native plant species, more than 80% are endemic and many are endangered. Annual rainfall in SW Australia varies greatly, from over 60" to less than 10". The plant families Myrtaceae (which includes the eucalypts) and Protaceae predominate.

4-16-94 Those on the field trip to the Jarillas, near Orogrande, were not expecting much in the way of blooming plants due to the dry winter but were surprised to see as much as we did. Eleven of us ventured into this remote area. On the way we saw numerous plants along the roadside near the Organ Mountains including *Astragalus*, *Verbena*, *Phacelia*, *Chocolate flower*, and *Argemone*. In the Jarillas we saw *Threadleaf groundsel*, *Stephanomeria*, and several cacti blooming. A Scott's oriole provided color amidst the dryness.

5/11/94 Local naturalist Susan Tweit read excerpts from "Sanctuary," one of the essays to be included in her forthcoming book Barren Wild and Worthless: The Unsung Chihuahua Desert. Ms. Tweit read a poetic evocation of the symbiotic relationship between the sphinx moth and the endemic Organ Mountain evening primrose. Her humorous delivery of this material made for an entertaining evening.

5/15/94 Christine Reuetzel led a group of 15 members and guests on a six-mile hike from Aguire Springs over the Baylor Pass of the Organ Mountains to Baylor Canyon on the Las Cruces side of the mountains. There was a profusion of Apache plume along with "fake" mock orange, Wright's silktassel, yellow bladderpod, Indian paintbrush, and lemon bush.

WATERWISE WILDLIFE GARDENING Too Close to Home? or The More The Merrier?

by Jim Knopf

Mention wildlife and gardening to a roomful of people, and half immediately imagine butterflies, hummingbirds and sunny weather, while the others see rummaging raccoons and deer debacles in their well-tended roses.

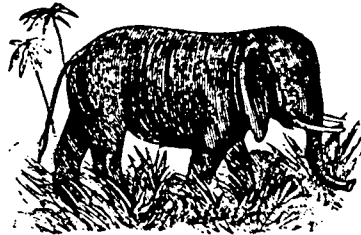
It turns out that combining water-wise (Xeriscape) gardening and wildlife gardening is a story of superb serendipity. By zoning a landscape into dry, medium, and wet areas, for example, not only can lots of water be saved, but delightful diversity automatically results. It also turns out that diversity and deliberate zoning of the landscape is one of the keys to successful wildlife gardening. Deer browsing, for example, drops off dramatically when a plant like Creeping Mahonia (*Mahonia repens*) is not irrigated. So, if you want to discourage deer damage, plant this and many other plants in your dry zones.

Waterwise wildlife gardening is a subject that is fascinating, frustrating, fun and even funny. It provokes thoughts about the role of native, near-native and introduced plants. It pokes at our plant prejudices, and botanical bigotry — is biodiversity always good and how native is native enough? It involves the perplexing and promising world of pollination biology. Why, for example, do some flowers insist on attracting hummingbirds and repelling crawling critters, while other plants couldn't care less?

Water-wise gardening with wildlife is about connecting with nature, right at home. It's a journey on which, "you'll win for awhile, but never forever". It's about being involved.

To make this compelling, but complex subject more comprehensible, the New Mexico Native Plant Society annual dinner program will start with a slide illustrated presentation of water-wise and wildlife gardening principles — plan to be entertained at the antics of other gardeners, but come with your own tales of triumph and despair to share and discuss.

Finally, has the "Holy Grail" of native, water-wise plants been found? *Scrophularia macrantha* (a New Mexico native) appears to be both shade and sun-loving, as well as being adapted to wet, medium, and dry conditions. Even more, deer don't seem to eat it, and hummingbirds love it. Hawk moths probably fight with hummingbirds for sips of "ambrosia of scrophularia" in the crepuscular hours. It appears to be completely hardy in cold




climates, and — would you believe? — it blooms from late spring until freezing weather stops it in the fall! But is it pretty? It's being tested in a number of Colorado gardens. Come to the annual meeting and find out more.

Jim Knopf will be our guest speaker for the Annual State Meeting. He is author of *The Xeriscape Flower Gardener: A Waterwise Guide for the Rocky Mountain Region* and a landscape architect in Boulder, Colorado. He will speak on Saturday evening on "Waterwise Wildlife Gardening".

Clinton Orders Landscaping Changes

By executive order President Clinton directed on April 26, 1994 that federal facilities and federally funded projects shall use environmentally beneficial practices. The directive specifically stated that **native plants** should be used when possible. A federal study found that natives protect not only our natural heritage but provide wildlife habitat, reduce the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and irrigations demands and associated costs. The order also suggested using integrated pest management (IPM) and recycling green waste (composting). Further, the order called for creation of outdoor demonstrations incorporating native plants to promote awareness to the public. Annual awards will be established to recognize outstanding landscaping efforts of agencies and individual federal employees. In addition the Agricultural Department is directed to conduct research on the suitability, propagation, and use of native plants for landscaping. Perhaps this will generate grant money for universities and others in the southwest to further explore the use of native plant materials for landscaping including, for example, water use studies.



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1994 NPSNM ANNUAL MEETING

The Santa Fe Chapter is sponsoring the 1994 meeting in Las Vegas, NM 26-28 August. Please join us!

FRIDAY, 26 August

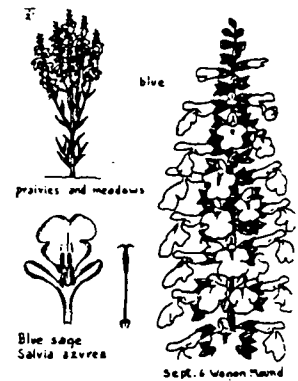
- 1:30PM Bob Pennington and Bill Isaacs will lead a tour of the Leonora Curtin Natural History Area. Meet at exit #271 off of I-25.
- 6:30PM Mixer with complimentary hors d'oeuvres & no host bar, pool-side at the Inn on the Santa Fe Trail.
- 7:15PM NPS Board Meeting, Inn on the Santa Fe Trail.

SATURDAY, 27 August

- 8:00AM Meet at the Inn on the Santa Fe Trail. Field trip to the Doolittle Ranch, a private ranch outside of Watrous and the Salman Ranch, near Mora. Lunch and transportation are included.
- 5:00PM Happy hour (no host bar) will begin at the banquet room of the Hillcrest Restaurant.
- 7:00PM Banquet dinner. Guest speaker, Jim Knopf will talk on "WATERWISE WILDLIFE GARDENING".

SUNDAY, 28 August

- 8:00AM Meet at the Inn on the Santa Fe Trail to car pool. Half day field trip into the Pecos Wilderness. Check-out time at the Inn on the Santa Fe Trail will accommodate our schedule.



Inn on the Santa Fe Trail, (505) 425-6791, is located at 1133 Grand Avenue, Las Vegas, NM. 87701. The Inn will offer us lodging at a reduced rate of \$40 or \$45. Reservations should be made immediately. Nearby camp sites and RV parks are available. Call the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce (1-800-832-5947) for more information. A registration fee of \$25.00 per-person covers Friday's hors d'oeuvres, Saturday's field trips, lunch & banquet dinner. Registration received after 18 August will be \$30.00 per person. Your official registration form will arrive in early July. If there are any questions please call (505) 988-9141 or write: NPS, 803 Camino Acoma, Santa Fe, NM. 87505.

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**WE WANT YOUR TREASURES!

It has been traditional to have an auction of donated items to help with the costs of putting on the annual meeting. We again ask your help in supplying items. Do you have a great tool you are no longer using? Books you know by heart that might help someone else? Plants that you want to replace with something new and different? If you can donate any of these, please let me know. If you need transportation for them, I will arrange something. If you have other ideas of things to contribute, please do. I have spoken to several merchants in Santa Fe and we will have many treasures from them also, so don't forget to bring your checkbook or some extra dollars. Sorry, no credit cards accepted! Ellen Wilde 982-1406. 110 Calle Pinonero, SF 87505.

Ballot: 1995-1996 Native Plant Society of New Mexico Board of Directors

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- Director at Large: Mary Whitmore Las Vegas _____
- Director at Large: Mary Helen Brunt Carlsbad _____

Mailed ballots must be received no later than August 24, 1994. Ballots may also be presented in person (to any board member) at the NPS State Meeting in Las Vegas any time before 7 pm Friday August 26, 1994.

Mail ballots to:
Mimi Hubby
525 Camino Cabra
Santa Fe NM 87501.

No candidates are opposed this year. Vote for as many as you wish.

RAILS TO TRAILS

by Jean Dodd

Otero has joined the local Rails to Trails Association as an organization member. Our first task is to have docents on the trail to point out the local trees on June 4 which is National Trails Day in Cloudcroft. The ambitious first project is a multi-use trail connecting Alamogordo, LaLuz, Mt.Park, High Rolls, Cloudcroft, Sunspot, and Oliver Lee State Park along the abandoned Alamogordo and Sacramento Mountains Railway right-of-way as much as possible.

The Rails to Trails Conservancy is a non profit organization whose goal is the building of a transcontinental trail network. In 45 states 6,800 miles of old railroad beds are now trails for hikers, skiers, and snowmobiles. Another 6,000 miles are in development. Those of you who were in Bluff Springs at the NPS State Meeting might remember the hikers using the old railroad bed in the Sacramentos. On Otero's field trips we have often come across old railroad beds in various parts of the state.

The local Railroad beds have been abandoned for almost 50 years. Only part of the right-of-way remains in the public domain. Some of the grades are privately owned, others have become part of Hwy. 82. Therefore the proposed trail will sometimes be adjacent to the old bed or connect with surviving segments.

For an idea of the possibilities see "Texas Highways", March 1994 for an article on a 64 mile trail between South Plains and Estelline in the Panhandle of Texas. There are old pictures of the railroad days and an account of the effect of the trail on the region. The new Rails to Trails group here expects the trail will bring some prosperity to the local economy's through sales of food, durable goods, and renting lodging, horses, bicycles, skis, etc. The trails will also provide lessons in local history, geology, botany, engineering, and zoology.

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico
465 Salopek #8
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

The Madrean Archipelago Conference

A binational conference, "Biodiversity and Management of the Madrean Archipelago: The Sky Islands of the Southwestern United States and Northwestern Mexico", will be held Sept. 19-23, 1994, in Tucson, AZ. For further information, contact L. F. DeBano, Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, c/o School of Renewable Natural Resources, University of Arizona, Tucson 85721; (602)621-2543, FAX (602)621-8801.

The purpose of this conference is to bring together land managers, conservation biologists, ecologists, resource managers, and environmentalists to develop better understanding and management of biodiversity on these unique mountains rising out of the Southwestern deserts. The conference is sponsored by the University of Arizona, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Soil Conservation Service, and several state agencies and organizations of the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico.



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