



# NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO NEWSLETTER

January/February 1995

Volume XX Number 1

## Mormon Tea, *Ephedra* spp.

By J. Joseph Pearl

excerpted from Southwest Lawn and Landscape, October 1991

Upon seeing the legendary Mormon Tea for the first time, I never thought that it would find its place in the commercial or residential landscape. *Ephedra* species are interesting rather than attractive. This plant has evolved into a true desert inhabitant.

There are several species that grow in the Arizona deserts, and numerous species that inhabit the Southwest United States. *Ephedra torreyana* and *E. nevadensis* are two of the most commonly seen. *E. torreyana* can be found growing at elevations of up to six thousand feet, while *E. nevadensis* is found at a little lower elevation. They will be seen growing along mesa edges, tops of mesas, in canyons and along hillsides. These plants apparently grow in the worst soil conditions known to mankind. Over 40 species are known to be growing on the northern hemisphere and in South America. All of the known species are found growing in shrub form. The largest an *Ephedra* can possibly get is six feet, plus or minus a few inches.

Aesthetically, the *Ephedras*, in particular *E. torreyana* and *E. nevadensis* are quite erect in appearance and stiff looking. *E. torreyana*, sometimes called joint fir, will obtain a height of up to three and a half feet and spread about the same. Although one would look at this stick-like plant and think that there were no leaves present, there are. The tiny leaves are one-twelfth of an inch long on *E. torreyana*, and even smaller on *E. nevadensis*. Branching on these shrubs is usually in groups of threes. The branches appear to be jointed, thus the name joint fir. *E. torreyana* has a bluish-green to a yellowish-green branch. The older plants tend to get a bark-like substance growing on them. It is usually furrowed and cracked-looking.

When it comes to flowering, these are certainly not the eye-catcher the fairy dusters are. The tiny flowers, ranging in size from one-twelfth to one third of an inch, are not showy. The color range of these little flowers is from yellow to a reddish color. Again I emphasize the lack of fire power the plant gives off. The season for this ~spectacle~ is April and May. Flowers are found in the joints of the branches. There are other choices of plants to select from if one wants color.

Now that I have over-done it on the lack of color and unattractiveness, I shall attempt to redeem this plant—It does have some positive qualities. For starters, it is a true desert dweller, and has no thorns, a plus for those who may want to use it near pools or areas where small children may play. For the person who likes to experiment with different plant material around their home, this is a must. The key to using this type of plant is to have a good imagination. There are plenty of places in the residential landscape to use the *Ephedra* species. Grown in full sun, it is drought tolerant, pest-free and requires virtually no maintenance.



Medicinal use is without a doubt one of the most interesting aspects of the *Ephedras*. Various cultures have been experimenting with and using it for centuries. The Chinese may well have been the first to use it. Shen Mung, the father of Chinese medicine used the Asiatic species, *E. minima*, as early as 2698 B.C. He used dried roots and stems for coughs, colds, headaches and fever symptoms. Ephedrine, an alkaloid extract of *E. distachya*, is still available in Chinese markets today. The Pimas used the stem parts as an anti-luetic, a treatment for venereal disease. The Mescaleros brewed the plant and used it as a treatment for eye infections. According to Violet Bunker, the early Mormon settlers drank the brew as an herbal tea, and would also give it to children in the springtime to purify the blood. Mrs. Bunker also recalled that a friend drank a gallon of the tea daily to treat a prostate condition with success. The medicinal values go on and on. Used as either an interesting addition to the landscape or as a healing herb, it is certainly worth a try.

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## NMSU LIBRARY GOPHER

The library gopher at NMSU now has internet connections that may be of interest to native plant enthusiasts. For example, one can get to the Missouri Botanical Garden gopher and view information in the in-progress *Flora of North America* or the online Gray Herbarium Index from Harvard. Other connections include cooperative extension gophers around the United States, the National Agricultural Library Gopher, and an index to publications from the New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service. New items and links are being added to the NMSU library gopher weekly.

Connections to the gopher are as follows:

1. From the internet, telnet to lib.nmsu.edu.
2. From another gopher, choose "all the gopher servers in the world" and follow the menus to New Mexico State University library. You could also follow connections to "library gophers."
3. From a modem dial 646-4942 and follow the menus to library. Once in the gopher follow "resources by subject" to "agriculture". For assistance ask your local internet expert.

## SECOND SOUTHWESTERN RARE AND ENDANGERED PLANTS CONFERENCE

This conference, first held in 1992 in Santa Fe, will be held Sept. 11-14, 1995 in Flagstaff, Arizona. Persons wishing to present papers should have abstracts submitted by April 1. Papers should fall under the following categories: Survey and Impact Assessment, Population Biology, Demographic Studies, Reproduction, Seed Biology, Distribution, Genetics and Systematics, Monitoring, Recovery Studies, or Strategies for Protection in an Ecosystem Context. To submit abstracts or for further information contact: Joyce Maschinski, The Arboretum at Flagstaff POB 670, Flagstaff, AZ 86002. (602) 774-1441

## CORRECTION, 1995 STATE MEETING DATE

The 1995 NPSNM State meeting in Silver City will be held August 18-20, not August 25-27 as previously reported in the *Newsletter*.

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, 10800 Griffith Park Drive, 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](mailto:tmckimmi@lib.nmsu.edu) Deadline for the next newsletter is Feb. 1

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#### SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE:

Our main address is: NPSNM, POB 5917, Santa Fe, NM 87502.  
See above for membership and newsletter correspondence.

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## Views from the South (one member's opinion)

by Tom Wootten

Probably this column should not be especially personal, but my wife and I had a really different, enlightening and fun experience this past weekend. We journeyed to Douglas, Arizona and attended a workshop sponsored by Arizona Game and Fish Department. They are seeking volunteers and "PAWS", ("Preserve Arizona Wolves" an organization dedicated to returning the Mexican Wolf to some part of its historical range in Arizona). Arizona Game and Fish apparently has an active volunteer program, and in this instance, they train interested people in the technique of surveying for wolves, using human vocalizations and recording any responses to the "howls". We thoroughly enjoyed meeting some new friends, learning more about one of our ecosystem's missing members, and actually going out in the boondocks at night, howling, and recording responses. Our expectations were that no one would hear a wolf, and our expectations were met. It was fun to hear and record responses from coyotes, as well as gain some practice in techniques. If a similar program is sponsored by NM Game and Fish or US Fish and Wildlife Service, I encourage all interested folks to get involved. Eleanor and I found it to be a big event for us.

What does this have to do with New Mexico native plants? Very little I suppose, but I always have figured that there should be a place for predators (other than humans) in our ecosystems, and we should set a goal to keep all we can. Call it self control, improving ecosystems or as you will. I want to see all critters as long as there is "home on the range" for them and we have an obligation to see that a home is left for them. Oh what a call for more true wilderness areas.

While en route to and from Douglas we did see large patches of Lehman's lovegrass, an African native grass, which has been seeded along highways as part of a mix, both in Arizona and New Mexico. This grass is extremely aggressive and often out competes our native grasses for space. I have not seen much really aggressive spreading in New Mexico, but in parts of Arizona monocultures of Lehman's lovegrass have developed, at the expense of native grasses. In some parts of Arizona this exotic was seeded for livestock feed, and I guess it is acceptable for that purpose. On the other hand, it apparently is not so beneficial as far as our wildlife is concerned. Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, in Arizona, is actively trying to eliminate this grass from within the refuge. Apparently the seed of this grass is so small it is of little value as far as bird and rodent feed is concerned. I understand some recent studies indicate that the monoculture areas are essentially devoid of some of our very necessary little creatures like ant and termites. My goodness, with all the cow manure around now, I would hate to see what it will be like without termites to break down the chips.

I am not sure if New Mexico Highway Department still uses Lehman's love grass in any of its mixes. I have asked that other grass seeds be used. Certainly any attempt by a Federal agency to reseed with this grass should be prohibited and any reseeding on private land should be discouraged.

### Colorado Native Plant Society develops new program

"Life in an Aspen Grove" is the title of a new educational program offered by the Colorado Native Plant Society. Available on videotape or slide/cassette, the program covers the complex ecosystem of the Aspen grove. It consists of 80 slides or 27 minute video or cassette. For further information contact the Colorado NPS, POB 200, Fort Collins, CO 80522-0200.

**National Wildflower Research Center** opens new Wildflower Center. The center, located in Austin, will provide information and research about native plants as well as meeting facilities. It will open April 8. For further information contact the center at 2600 FM 973 North, Austin 78725-4201 or call (512) 292-4200.

### 1996 NPSNM Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars!! The 1996 NPS-NM annual meeting will be held October 17-20 1996 in El Paso, TX. This will be a joint annual meeting with the NPS of TX. The Flora of the Chihuahuan Desert (including gardening with these plants) will be the focus of the meeting. Activities will include a full day of speakers, field trips, a banquet, plus the usual opportunities to see old friends and make new ones!

NPS-TX is doing the lion's share of the planning: this will be their 7th or 8th meeting featuring a different area. How can you get involved? Contact the NPS-NM planning committee: Wynn Anderson, Jean Dodd or Lisa Johnston. Several mailings will be sent out over the next year. If you're interested in being a speaker (or know someone who might be), please let us know!! We will also need people to work the book sales booth, and assist with registration, field trips, etc. But most of all, plan to attend!

1996 also marks the 20th anniversary of NPS-NM. IT'S GONNA BE GREAT!!!!

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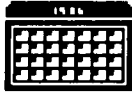


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# CALENDAR

## OTERO

- Jan. 14. 2:00 pm. Sierra School. "Noxious Weed Bill, 1995 legislature"; speakers Richard Lee, Coop. Extension Weed scientist, NM Rep. Bill Porter, and landowner John Connor.
- Feb. 10. 5:30 p.m. Potluck at Hendzels, 58 Rodeo Drive. Slides of Mexico by C. Pase and of Estonia by H. Osterreich.

## SANTA FE

- Jan. 18. 7:30 pm. Rm 122 Evens Science Bldg. St. Johns College. "How badly do you want it? Thumbnail Guides to Garden Photography." by Charles Mann.
- Feb. 15. 7:30 Evens Science Bldg. "Goldenrods Made Easy" by Chick Keller.

## LAS CRUCES

- Jan. 19. Joint meeting with Sierra Club and Audubon to meet the S.W. Regional Forester, Chip Cartwright, and discuss policies and plans for ecosystem management. 7:30 NMSU Science Hall.
- Feb. 12. Highway trash pickup. Meet at St. James Church at 11 am. We'll carpool from there to our site on S. main.



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# CHAPTER REPORTS

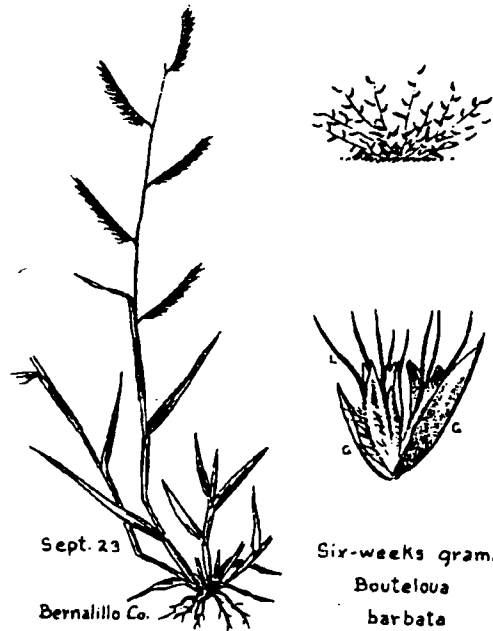
## Albuquerque - Lu Bennett


In October our speaker was Robert Dewitt Ivey, author of *Flowering Plants of New Mexico*. He gave instruction on grass anatomy and showed many slides from his grasslands collection. His presentation included dry land grasslands, such as prairies, mountain meadows, arctic and alpine tundras, and desert grassland. Also shown were wet grasslands or marshes, including salt marshes of Florida and Arctic coast of Canada, mountain lake edges and the Rio Grande floodplain. He also led a field trip on the following Saturday to the Elena Gallegos open space in the Sandia foothills.

In November Ross Coleman of Hydra Corporation made a presentation on "Constructed Wetlands". He showed a constructed wetland for his own residential use in the East Mountain area. It is based on the natural processes that occur in marshes, ponds and wetlands. Black water from a septic tank is piped into a lined

gravel bed planted with cattails and reeds and other native plants. The process removes the pollutants from the water making it acceptable for irrigation or a pond. Some of the plants near his own constructed wetland are *Lobelia Cardinalis*, Yellow Monkey Flower, Marsh Marigold, Primrose and *Yerba Mansa*.

There are several constructed wetlands in the Albuquerque area, including one at the Village of Los Ranchos Community Center. Also, the City of Albuquerque is undertaking a research project for a wetlands. An issue of contention is the amount of water lost through evaporation.





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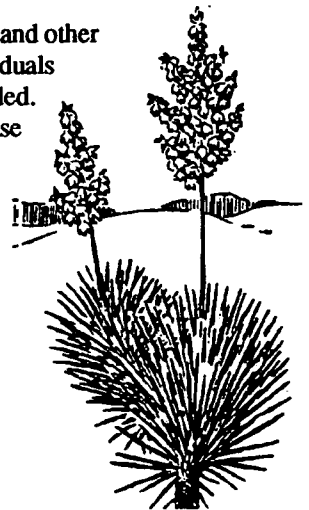
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## DEVELOPING YOUR LAND?

1. IF YOU ARE DEVELOPING PROPERTY WITH EXISTING NATURAL VEGETATION - CLEAR AS LITTLE OF THE SITE AS POSSIBLE! It takes time to grow mature plants in this arid climate, so cherish them. Native plants are adapted to this environment and will help protect your home or business from noise and dust. Excessive clearing causes erosion, increases dust during wind storms, and provides perfect habitat for non-native weeds such as Russian Thistle. Once you decide what must be cleared, survey the area for plants that could be dug up and planted into other areas of your landscape. Although many natives are difficult to transplant, pinon, cacti, yuccas and succulents have a good chance of surviving and are worth the effort.

2. LANDSCAPE YOUR NEW HOME OR BUSINESS WITH NATIVE PLANTS! Native plants can add a surprising amount of shade, texture and color to your landscape. In addition to providing beauty, natives require less fertilizer, pest control, water, and general maintenance. Not only is this nice for your pocketbook, but it also helps our environment.

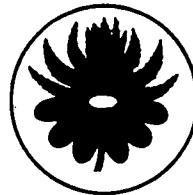
NOTE: Plants collected from the wild are often used in landscaping. This is especially true for cacti, yuccas, and other easily transplanted species. Many local populations of native plants have been decimated by unscrupulous individuals who steal from public or private land. For this reason, using propagated nursery stock is strongly recommended. Don't be shy, ask your nursery or landscape company about the source of the plant material. If you do purchase collected plant material, be sure and look for the New Mexico Department of Agriculture Tag that should be attached to each plant when you buy it. This is a good indication the plant was aquired legally and is free of disease or pests. If you suspect foul play, don't put yourself in a bad situation - call the nearest New Mexico Dept. of Agriculture office, Bureau of Land Management office, Forest Service office, or even the police. Collecting plants to sell without the proper permits is against the law.



### CONSERVATION CORNER

As conservation chair for the state board, I would like to take this opportunity, to discuss some issues of interest to our Society. Look for this article in your *Newsletter* from time to time if you are interested in conservation issues.

As the population of New Mexico continues to increase, we see more and more development in our communities throughout the state. This development has a heavy impact on our native plant communities and is cause for concern. Many development practices require clearcutting of large tracts of land. This can have many negative impacts. The article "Developing your Land" (above) is also being distributed as a flyer from NPSNM. It is an attempt to inform newcomers to our state (and others) of the importance of saving our native vegetation. Additionally it covers: 1) the value of using natives for landscaping; and 2) a warning about plants illegally collected from the wild. It would also be useful to have a local address or phone number of where to contact for more information. These leaflets could be distributed through local visitor's centers, chambers of commerce, real estate offices, developers and builders, etc. For copies of this or more information, please contact me - Greg Magee, P.O. Box 2404, Las Cruces, New Mexico, 88004.



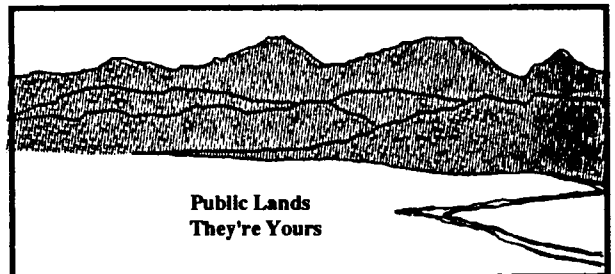
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Many thanks to Robert Dewitt Ivey for permission to use his wonderful drawings from *Flowering Plants of New Mexico*, second edition, in our *Newsletter*.

## Books for sale by NPSNM listing of Jan. 1, 1995

	Retail	NPS-NM Discount Price
Alpine Wildflowers of the Rocky Nountains (Duft & Mosely, 1989)	9.95	8.00
Amateur Botany in New Nexico (Schoenwetter, 1964)	.75*	.75*
Audubon Guide to Wildflowers, Western (Spellenberg, 1979)	17.95	14.40
Botanical Latin (Stearns, 1983)	45.00	36.00
Cacti of the Southwest (Earle, 1963)	13.50	10.80
Cacti of Texas and Neighboring States (Weniger, 1991)	22.95	18.40
Colorado Flora: Eastern Slope (Weber, 1990) HB	27.50	22.00
Colorado Flora: Western Slope (Weber, 1987) HB	27.50	22.00
Common Edible & Useful Plants of the West (Sweet, 1976)	4.95	4.00
Common Plants of the Grand Canyon	4.50	3.60
Desert and Mountain Plants of the Southwest (Leake, 1993)	18.95	15.20
Desert Plants: Recipes and Remedies (Shields, 1989)	9.95	8.00
Desert Accents (AZ Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
Desert Grasses (AZ Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
Desert Ground Cover and Vines (AZ Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
Desert Shrubs (AZ Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
Desert Trees (AZ Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
Desert Wildflowers (Az. Native Plant Society)	2.00*	1.80*
***Buy the set of six and save! !!	11.00	9.50
A Dictionary of Landscape Architecture (Morrow, 1987)	19.95	16.00
Drip Irrigation for Every Landscape & All Climates (Kourik, 1992)	16.00	13.60
Edible Native Plants of the Rocky Mts. (Harrington, 1967)	11.95	9.60
Edible Wild Plants of the Prairie (Kindscher, 1987)	9.95	8.00
Field Guide to Rocky Mountain Wildflowers (Craighead, 1974)	12.95	10.40
Field Guide to SW & Texas Plants (Niehaus, et al., 1984)	16.95	13.60
Field Guide to Texas Trees (Simpson, 1988)	16.95	13.60
Flora of the Great Plains (Great Plains Flora Assoc., 1986)	55.00	44.00
Flora of New Mexico - reprint (Wooton & Standley)	48.00	38.40
Flowering Plants of New Mexico Second Ed. (Ivey, 1986)	24.95	20.00
Flowers of the Southwest Deserts (Dodge & Janish, 1985)	9.95	8.00
Flowers of the Southwest Mountains (Arnberger & Janish, 1982)	9.95	8.00
A Full Life in a Small Place (Bowers, 1993)	13.95	11.20
A Garden of Wildflowers (Art, 1986)	12.95	10.40
Gathering the Desert (Nabhan, 1985)	15.95	12.80
Grasses of Southwestern United States (Gould, 1951)	15.95	12.80
The Great Southwest Nature Fact Book (Tweit, 1993)	12.95	10.40
How to Grow Native Plants of Texas & the Southwest (Nokes, 1986)	37.50	30.00
How to Photograph Flowers, Plants and Landscapes (Fell, 1980)	9.95	8.00
Indian Uses of Native Plants (Murphey, 1959)	3.50	3.25
An Illustrated Guide to Arizona Weeds (Parker, 1972)	19.95	16.00
Jewels of the Plains (Barr, 1983)	19.95	16.00
Landscaping for Water Conservation: XERISCAPE (Denver Water Dept., 1989)	5.75	4.60
Landscaping for Wildlife (MN Dept. Natural Resources, 1986)	7.95	6.40
Landscaping to Save Water in the Desert (Johnson & Harbison, 1985)	8.95	7.20
Landscaping with Native Plants of Texas & Southwest (Miller, 1991)	19.95	16.00
Landscaping with Native Texas Plants: Region by Region (Wasowski, 1988)	37.95	30.40
Landscaping with Wildflowers & Native Plants (Ortho, 1984)	5.95	4.80
@Los Remedios (Moore, 1990)	8.95	7.20
Low Water Use Plants for California and the Southwest (Schuler, 1993)	14.95	12.00
Management of SW Desert Soils (Fuller, 1975)	8.95	7.20
Medicinal Plants of Deserts & Canyons (Moore, 1989)	11.95	9.60
Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West (Moore, 1979)	11.95	9.60
Mexican Roadside Flora (Mason & Mason, 1987)	19.95	16.00
Mosses: Utah and the West (Flowers, 1973)	7.95	6.40

Mushrooms and Truffles of the Southwest (States, 1990)	12.95	10.40
Nanise: A Navajo Herbal (Mayes & Lacey, 1990)	27.00	21.60
Native Plants for Southwestern Landscapes (Mielke, 1993)	22.95	18.40
New Mexico Range Plants (NMSU Circular #374)	3.00	2.80
New Mexico Vegetation (Dick-Peddie, 1993)	45.00	36.00
100 Desert Wildflowers of the Southwest (Bowers, 1989)	4.95	4.00
100 Roadside Wildflowers of the Southwest Woodlands (Bowers, 1987)	4.95	4.00
Plants for Dry Climates (Duffield) [Revised ed. 1992]	14.95	12.00
Photographing Wildflowers (Blacklock, 1987)	12.95	10.40
A Practical Guide to Edible & Useful Plants (Tull, 1987)	23.95	19.20
Requiem for a Lawnmower (Wasowski, 1992)	15.95	12.80
Roadside Geology of New Mexico (Chronic, 1987)	11.95	9.60
Roadside Plants of Northern New Mexico (Tierney, 1983)	9.95	8.00
Rocky Mountain Flora (Weber, 1976)	17.50	14.00
Rocky Mountain Wildflowers (Dannen, 1981)	4.95	4.00
Santa Fe Bouquet (Hughes & Post, 1989)	4.95	4.00
Collecting, Processing, and Germinating Seeds of Wildland Plants (Young, 1986)	24.95	21.50
70 Common Cacti of the SW (Fischer, 1989)	6.95	5.60
Shrubs of the Great Basins (Mozingo, 1987)	24.95	20.00
Shrubs and Trees of the Southwest Deserts (Bowers, 1993)	9.95	8.00
Shrubs and Trees of the Uplands (Elmore, 1976)	9.95	8.00
Southwestern Landscaping with Native Plants (Phillips, 1987)	19.95	16.00
Spring Wildflowers of New Mexico (Martin, 1984)	12.95	10.40
Texas Native Ornamental Trees (NPS-TX)	2.00*	1.80*
Texas Wildflowers: A Field Guide (Lohmiller)	12.95	10.40
Trees & Shrubs of Trans-Pecos Texas (Powell, 1988)	19.95	16.00
Trees of the Great Basin (Lanner, 1987)	31.95	25.60
Trees, Shrubs & Woody Vines of the SW (Vines, 1962)	62.50	50.00
The Tumbleweed Gourmet (Niethammer, 1987)	20.00	16.00
Weeds of the West (Western Society of Weed Science, 1992)	22.00	20.00
Western Edible Wild Plants (Harrington)	8.95	7.20
Wildflower Folklore (L. Martin, 1993)	16.95	13.60
Wildflower Handbook (National Wildflower Research Center, 2nd ed., 1992)	12.95	10.40
The Wildflower Gardener's Guide: Calif., Desert SW & Northern Mexico (Art)	12.95	10.40
The Wildflower Gardener's Guide: N.Pacific, Rocky Mt., W. Canada (Art, 1990)	12.95	10.40
The Wildflower Meadow Book (L. Martin, 1990)	12.95	10.40
Wildflowers of the Guadalupe Mountains (Warnock, 1974)	11.95	9.60
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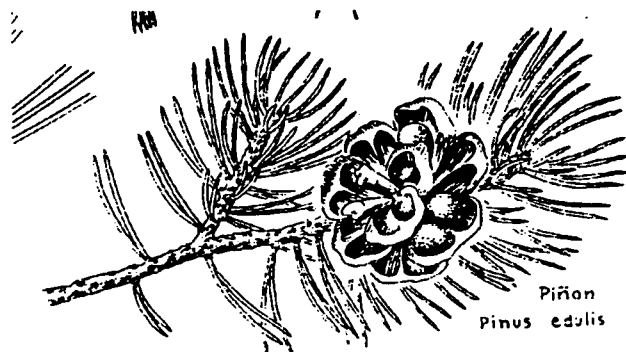
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## ALIEN NATIVE OR WHEN NATIVES ARE NOT NATURAL

by Stanwyn G. Shetler  
reprinted from *Chinquapin: The Newsletter of the Southern  
Appalachian Botanical Society* Vol. 2 (3):2, Winter, 1994

Larry Mellichamp's brief essay, "Native or Exotic?," in the fall issue of *Chinquapin* made some very useful points and prompted me to add a few comments of my own, which provide a somewhat different "take" on the subject.

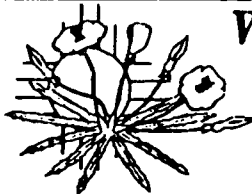
Every plant sowed or transplanted is an alien or exotic, whether or not it is a native species of the region. The very act of transplanting or sowing is an active manipulation that in some measure, large or small, falsifies the history of plant migration and establishment in the area. In many ways, this kind of transplanting is more insidious than bringing in blatant exotics that clearly stand out. What would appear to be a "natural" dissemination is in fact an artificial one. Why, one might ask, is it more acceptable to play Johnny Appleseed with native introductions than with exotic introductions? The flip side of this is that an alien species can be more "natural" than a native one if the native plant has been transplanted and the alien species is a longtime naturalized species that has found its way to the new location by unassisted means:

Just what is "native" or "natural" anyway? Some presumptive aliens have been part of the North American flora for so long that there is no agreement on whether they are native or naturalized. The concept of "native" vs. "exotic" is very useful as long as one remembers the relativity of this distinction. There can be no absolute definition of "native," and no one will ever be able to create a definitive list of the "native" plants of North America. For starters, as Dr. Mellichamp points out, Native Americans did not make a list. Even with clearly naturalized plants that have been here

for many years and have long since been spreading on their own accord, it is debatable whether they should be regarded other than as a part of the contemporary "natural" vegetation.

Is a species transplanted from the same premises, county, or state any more "native" and virtuous in the landscape than a species from a continent or half-a-continent away? An **introduction is an introduction is an introduction**, no matter the source. Those who use native species for landscaping should always be aware that they are concocting artificial landscapes, **simulating but not creating** natural ones. There may be many virtues in planting truly (i.e., unarguably) native species (e.g., preventing exotic invasions, gene pool preservation), but achieving a genuinely natural landscape is not one of them. However subtle the planting may be, the end result is the same - an introduced flora, hence a disturbed and falsified landscape. A plant, once *ex situ* is introduced. Although it may be a locally native species, it no longer is a native plant in the purest sense, even if it has been moved only inches from its original location.

— Stanwyn G. Shetler



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