

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

NEWSLETTER

April– June 2000

Volume XXV Number 2

NASA WARNS OF LONG DROUGHT

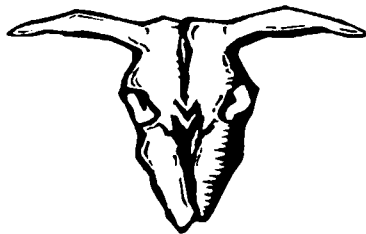
By John Fleck

Excerpted from Albuquerque Journal

New satellite data suggests we might be slipping into a long-term drought similar to the drought of the 1950s that devastated New Mexico.

According to NASA climate researcher Bill Patzert, the La Niña pattern that has left us warm and dry this winter might become the norm rather than the exception over the next 20 years or more.

Other scientists are more cautious. But if Patzert is right, New Mexico could be in trouble, said climate researcher Julio Betancourt, who has been studying the drought of the 1950s with an eye toward understanding what will happen in the Southwest when the inevitable new drought occurs.



Patzert acknowledged there will be scientific skeptics, but said by the time there's solid evidence for a drought it will already be under way. The climate is warmer now than in the 50s, he said, which will accentuate the effects of the next drought. Also, 680,000 people lived in New Mexico in 1950. Today, that number is 1.7 million.

Editor's note: *If now isn't the right time to promote drought-tolerant native plants, what is?*

What is a Native Plant? And When Does it Matter?

By Sally Wasowski, Taos Chapter

I've seen these two questions provoke raging controversy among environmentalists.

The basic definition of a native plant is: any species that arrived at a particular bio-region via natural means: wind, water, birds or native beasts, evolved there over a very long period of time — millennia, even millions of years — and has never been genetically tampered with by humans.

Normally, this definition is contested only by those who don't believe in evolution, although I've met a few sentimental romantics who protest vehemently that *any* plant that can make it on its own "deserves to be called native."

Russian olive, Siberian elm, Hungarian-brome, dandelion, tumbleweed or (*Cont'd on Pg 10*)

INSIDE

Butterfly Gardens

Plight of Ancient Forests

Rare Plants Conference

Sage Advice

Workshops

And much more...

The Prez Sez:

A Missing Link: Knowledgeable Students of New Mexico Flora

At every level of our society there is a serious shortage of individuals who are knowledgeable of their regional flora. At the present time I am learning of this problem within the nine chapters of NPSNM. Most are having trouble locating a cadre of individuals within the chapter who feel secure leading local field trips. At the same time we find people of all ages who are interested in learning more about local flora, participating in field trips, and enrolling in short courses that will assist them in using the available literature to identify the plants that surround them. My best support for this statement is the fact that the most successful programs of chapters and the state organization are field activities.

This need for informed teachers of field botany extends to schools, universities, state and federal agencies such as the US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, horticulturists, landscapers, and many who define themselves as environmentalists. Many folks have the best intentions to purchase native species for their gardens, but find the task daunting without some knowledge of the regional flora, or without the aid of a nurseryman and/or landscapers who will work with them. How will it ever be possible to protect native plants, reduce the numbers of weeds and exotic species, and develop patterns of natural landscaping, if the larger population is not familiar with the native flora?

The NPSNM is attempting to address this multifaceted problem from several directions. In recent years the Board of Directors has provided funding for activities they feel will provide help for all who are interested in learning more about the native flora of New Mexico. Several of these activities include:

- * Producing regional publications for distribution to residents and newcomers to the community that will familiarize them with their local flora.
- * Funding workshops and college courses for elementary and secondary teachers, many of whom have a limited knowledge of local flora and the life zones in which they and their students live.

- * Conducting specialized workshops to train individuals within chapters so they will be able to conduct floristic surveys, teach short courses, and use more specialized literature in identifying species.

- * Assisting friends of individual state parks in the development of floras, slide programs, and lectures that will help local residents learn more about the value and role of the park to their part of the state.

- * Encouraging nurseries and landscapers to join with the NPSNM to help citizens develop a better understanding of their native flora and to recognize not only the beauty of these plants but the long term biologic value of living with native flora rather than being at odds with it.

If you or individuals with whom you work in your local chapter have interests in any of these activities, or in similar programs you would like to see developed, please contact a member of the Board of Directors or submit a proposal that you feel will meet a regional need.

Jack Carter

NPSNM President

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A FUN, "NO ATTITUDE" GALLERY

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BOTANICAL QUIZ

Last issue's question:

"What is Dr. Heimlich's favorite native plant?"

Answer: The Chokecherry! *Prunus virginiana*

Winner of the Free NPSNM T-Shirt is:

WES BRITTENHAM, Albuquerque chapter

New Question:

"What is Ben and Jerry's favorite plant?"

Answers do not necessarily have to be native to New Mexico. Send your answer on a post card to Botanical Quiz, POBox 607, Arroyo Seco NM 87514. Winner will be drawn from all correct answers received by 5/1/00.

POINT...COUNTER POINT

“Environmentalists practice pagan idolatry by worshipping nature at the expense of the financial welfare of humans.” *James Watt*

Former Sec. of the Interior

“The fact is, you can’t have a healthy economy and a severely degraded life-support system.”

Fred Krueger

*Religious Campaign for
Forest Conservation*

GRASS IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP AUGUST 16-18

NPSNM is offering this outstanding 3-day course led by Dr. Kelly Allred at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Cost is \$40 for members and \$52 for non-members. Details will be in the Summer Newsletter, or call Bob Sivinski at 505-438-9690 evenings or email at bsivinski@state.nm.us.



“If the environmentalists get their way, there won’t be any trees left to cut!”

F Y I

Are ancient forests really in peril? Most definitely, according to Greenpeace. Their assessment is that these forests are “rapidly deteriorating,” with the following consequences: loss of plant and animal habitats, a marked decline in species populations, loss of recreational opportunities, and loss of clean air and water. The following is from the Winter 1999 issue of Greenpeace Magazine:

Half of the world’s total forest cover has been destroyed, developed or converted for agricultural use. Only one fifth of the world’s ancient forests remain in areas large enough to support their full range of native wildlife and ecological processes.

Industrial logging poses the greatest threat to the Earth’s remaining ancient forests. Once cut down, the trees are converted into lumber, as well as pulp and paper products, including toilet paper, newspapers, phone books, and food additives. The United States alone accounts for nearly one third of the world’s wood consumption.

As a consequence of this deterioration, livelihoods and cultures of millions of indigenous people are also being destroyed. The destruction of ancient forests further exacerbates global warming and changing weather patterns by releasing carbon into the atmosphere.

The remaining ancient forests are threatened by logging, development, mining, grazing, and conversion to agriculture. An area of ancient forest approximately the size of one football field is lost every two seconds.

Hope?

Over a dozen major U.S. companies including Nike, Levi’s, Hewlett Packard and Kinko’s pledged to phase out products derived from ancient forests. And, the world’s largest retailer of wood products, the Home Depot, pledged to remove all products derived from ancient forests from its shelves by 2002, and to prioritize the purchase of wood products from independently certified well-managed forests. Lowe’s, the second largest do-it-yourself retailer, soon followed Home Depot’s example.

A spokesperson for Greenpeace said this is just the beginning. The environmental organization is working with these and other companies toward a swift and thorough market transition.

Letters to the Editor

I'd like to comment on the short article about salt cedar in the January newsletter. While I do agree that salt cedar is a nasty invader, posing significant ecological threats to riparian systems, I feel it is important to remember that one of the proposed cures for the invasion — a beetle — is an exotic as well. Exotics can have unforeseen impacts on ecosystems.

In New Mexico, environmental managers proposed the use of an exotic European weevil to control another exotic- the teasle *Carduus nutans*. This exotic was encroaching on the habitat of endangered Mescalero thistle *Cirsium vinaceum*. Fortunately, a conservation biologist pointed out that *C. nutans* and *C. vinaceum* were closely related and the weevil might prefer the endangered thistle to the exotic teasle. Laboratory tests confirmed this hypothesis. (Dick-Peddie, Wm. 1993, *New Mexico Vegetation, Past, Present and Future*, University of New Mexico Press.)

Unfortunately, horticulture has helped to unleash some of the world's largest plant invasions. More than 60 percent of North America's worst weeds are still being sold by nurseries. Russian olive *Elaeagnus angustifolia* is a good example. In the late 1800s, it was introduced to the U.S. as an ornamental, and escaped cultivation. Until recently, the U.S. Soil and Conservation Service recommended its use for wildlife plantings and wind-breaks. *Many native plant nurseries regularly stock Russian olive and encourage its use in home landscapes.*

Incidentally, tamarisk was introduced by a management agency for erosion control. Until recently, we simply have not considered the full ramifications of our actions when we introduce exotics into native landscapes. With each exotic introduction, we homogenize the world. Loss of biological diversity is a threat to human health; the economic burden in controlling exotics can be overwhelming.

Environmental managers face difficult decisions when it comes to controlling exotics, but we can all help. We can plant natives in our home landscapes, we can remove potential invaders, and we can spread the word about the dangers of introducing exotics.

Kathy Whiteman, Gila Chapter

Call for Papers for Southwestern Rare Plants Conference

Abstracts should be submitted by April 3rd

A call for papers for the 3rd Southwestern Rare and Endangered Plants Conference, which will be held in Flagstaff, Arizona, September 25-28, has been made and New Mexico botanists should make an effort to contribute, says Bob Sivinski, NPSNM Vice President.

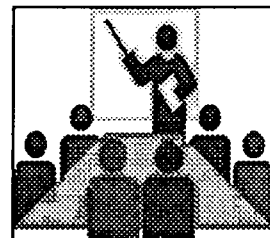
"This is a good opportunity to meet other botanists," says Sivinski, "and to find out what is happening in the Southwest, and get your research or rare plant observations published in a well-done proceedings."

Papers on surveys, monitoring, distribution, population biology, genetics, systematics, pollination and reproduction, recovery strategies, preserving biodiversity, protecting ecosystems, or any other plant conservation topic are suitable for short presentations that will be published in the proceedings. Abstracts must be submitted by April 3rd to:

Dr. Joyce Maschinski
The Arboretum at Flagstaff
4001 S. Woody Mountain Rd
Flagstaff AZ 86001
520-774-1442
FAX 520-774-1441

For people wishing to attend this conference, pre-registration fees are \$40 for students and \$100 for non-students, and must be received by April 3rd. Sivinski suggests checking the Arboretum's web page for additional information and a registration form. <http://www.thearb.org>

He adds, "Let's make sure New Mexico is well represented at this conference."



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Chapter Activities & Events

ALBUQUERQUE

Meetings held at 7:30 PM at the Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas Blvd NE (Between Wyoming and Eubank)

April 6: "Invasive Weed Problem in New Mexico" Frannie Decker

April 29: Native Plant Show & Sale in conjunction with Albuquerque Garden Center, 9 AM to 4 PM.

May 4: Science Fair Presentations and Reception for Winners of our Science Fair Awards.

June 1: "Enjoying New Mexico's Butterflies" Steve Cary. Steve will lead butterfly field trip on June 3rd. Contact Carolyn Dodson (268-7889) for details.

CARLSBAD

From Feb. 19th to April 1st, Dean Ricer taught a course in xeriscaping and natural landscaping at the New Mexico State University at Carlsbad for the adult education department...Members of the chapter joined forces with members of the Chihuahuan Desert Conservation Alliance to do a plant survey in the Brokoff Mountains.

GILA

Meetings are held at 7 PM at Harlan Hall, WNMU campus.

April 20: "On the Trail of E. O. Wooten —Early NM Botanist" Dr. Kelly Allred.

April 29: Field Trip, Gila Lower Box, North of Lordsburg. Meet WNMU Fine Arts lot 8 AM. Led by Jack Carter..

May 7: Field Trip. TBA.

June 18: Field Trip, Catwalk, Glenwood NM. Meet WNMU Fine Arts lot 8 AM. Led by Jack Carter.

LAS CRUCES

Meetings held at 7 PM on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Southwest Environment Center, 1494 S. Solano Dr.

April 12: "Bat and Plant Associations: Important, Interesting and Unappreciated." Marikay Ramsey.

April 15, 10 AM: Field Trip to Modoc Mine Rd at the base of the Organ Mts. Leader Lisa Mandelkern.

April 29, 9 AM: Field Trip to Pena Blanca area. Leader Terry Anderson, 523-5295. Meet at Pan Am, Center North Parking Lot.

Las Cruces cont'd

May 10: "Noxious Weeds" Frannie Decker, NMSU Weed Specialist.

May 13, 8 AM: Field Trip to Anthony's Nose area. Leader Terry Peterson.

May 27: Annual Native Plant Society Garden Tour. Details TBA.

June 14: "Plant Ecology on the Jornada and Sevilleta" Debra Peters.

June 17, 7 AM: Field Trip to Cooke's Peak area. Meet at K-Mart Hwy 70.

OTERO

April 8: Field trip to UTEP Research Ranch in west Texas, Meet at Chuy's Restaurant in Van Horn at 8 AM. 4-Wheel Drive vehicles required for ranch tour. To sign up or for more information, call Jean Dodd at 434-3041.

April 29: Earth Day celebration at Alameda Park in Alamogordo from 9 AM to 4 PM. Judy Tribble and Betty Claypool will demonstrate making recycled paper with dried native plant inserts. Need volunteers to "person" our booth. Call Don Tribble at 585-9017.

May 6: Annual Plant Sale at Garden Center, 10th Street and Oregon. Starts at 8:30 AM. We need help in procuring plants and helping with sale. Call Hildy Reiser at 439-5196.

May 13: Field Trip, 8 AM to 2 PM. Tour of Oliver Lee Memorial Park (12 miles south of Alamogordo) led by Joe Duft and Charles Wood. Includes canyon trail walk, ranch house tour and slide show. Spring wildflowers should be great! Bring lunch, water, hat and hiking shoes.

May 20-21: Field trip to Guadalupe Mountains with Len Hendzel.

Day One – 7 AM. Meet at K-Mart parking lot in Alamogordo. Bring food and drinks. Meet with Forest Service people at turn-off to Sitting Bull Falls (junction US 285 & NM 137) at 10 AM. Return to vehicles 3 PM and proceed to Carlsbad for overnight at motel of your choice. Plan to catch the bats at sunset at National Park. *Day Two* – Leave for Rattlesnake Springs 8 AM. Leave for Brantly Dam State Park 11 AM. Depart for home 1 PM.

June 10: 1-4 PM. Native Plant potluck, wine tasting, and ice cream social at Claypool home, 24040 US Hwy 70 in Bent.

Events & Activities Cont'd

SACRAMENTO MTS (Ruidoso)

April 15: Field Trip to Three Rivers Petroglyph Site. Meet at entrance to site on Hwy 54 at 10 AM

May 20: Field Trip to Mountain Haven Wildlife Ranch. Call 378-1902 for details.

June 10: Joint potluck supper with Otero Chapter at Claypool home in Bent, 1 to 4 PM. See Otero.

SAN JUAN (Farmington area)

No programs currently scheduled, but chapter involved in advising Friends of the Farmington Nature Center in establishing native landscape there...Members are also working at the Aztec Ruins pulling weeds and promoting a native plants on the grounds...There are also plans to establish a plant rescue committee.

SANTA FE

Meetings third Wednesday of the month at the Evans Science Laboratory Building, Rm 122, Saint John's College, 7:30 PM

April 19: "*New Mexico Cactus and Succulents*" David Ferguson, Curator of Desert & Native Plants, Rio Grande Botanic Garden, Albuquerque.

June 18: Field Trip. Tour the gardens at the Gerald Peters Gallery, 1011 Paseo de Peralta with the landscape's designer, Barbara Fix. 2 to 4 PM.

TAOS

Meetings are held second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM, San Geronimo Lodge, 1101 Witt Rd.

April 12: "*Water: Its Future in New Mexico*" Thomas Turney, engineer with Interstate Stream Commission. Tom spoke at the last annual meeting and gave an outstanding presentation.

May 17: "*Butterfly Research*" Nirmalan & Komalam Mayura return for another fun-filled evening.

June 14: "*The ABCs of Gardening with Natives*" Bob Pennington, owner of Agua Fria Nursery in Santa Fe.

June 24: Field Trip to Bluebird Herb Farm, 11 AM to 1 PM. 71 Cuchilla Rd. For details call Sandra Ross at 776-8896.

Update: On Feb. 22nd, Sally Wasowski and Coralie Jones presented plans for a new native landscape at the Visitors Center to the Taos Chamber of Commerce. It was unanimously approved, and will be presented before the town council in May.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Annual Meeting
of the
Native Plant Society of New Mexico
is scheduled for
Sept. 29th thru Oct. 1st, 2000
in

Las Cruces

Presentations, field trips,
silent auction, fiesta-style banquet, panel
discussion and lots of fun!

(Details and Registration Forms in July Newsletter)

Proposals invited for presentations
dealing with the meeting theme:
*"A Growing Understanding
of the Chihuahuan Desert"*

30-minute talks are welcome on the
following topics:

- * Ecology/Environment * Plant Life
- * Animal Life * Recreation * History
- * Geology * Geography * Archeology

Deadline for proposals is May 20th!

Send to Lisa Mandelkern
5259 Singer Rd, Las Cruces 88005
505-526-0917

lisamand@newmexico.com

We're On-Line!

NPSNM has a new website. We're still under construction, but we now have information on activities, chapters, and membership. As more images and info comes in, our site will become bigger and better. Eventually, there'll be a photo gallery with text and dichotomous keys to particular groups of flora.

<http://www.npsnm.unm.edu>

LEUCOPHYLLUM SPECIES THIS "SAGE" MAKES POOR CUISINE BUT GREAT LANDSCAPES

By Wynn Anderson

Previously ran in Southwest Trees and Turf

Although Chihuahuan Desert plant contributions to the landscape industry have been many, none has had a greater impact on Southwest landscapes than the genus *Leucophyllum*. Despite often being labeled as "sage," as in Texas Sage and Rain Sage, they are actually members of the *Scrophulariaceae* or snapdragon family and not *Laminaceae* where the true sages reside. In southern New Mexico and west Texas, these natives are instantly recognizable when the summer monsoon rains sweep across the desert and the shrubs burst into full bloom.

Colorful displays

All *Leucophyllum* species produce a bright profusion of 1/2 to 1 inch long flowers — typically in various shades of red-violet to rose, lavender to blue-purple, even pale pink and rarely white. These floral displays often seem to spring unexpectedly from nowhere just a few days after the first hard rains of late summer have soaked the ground. This gives rise to another common name, Barometer Bush. Actually triggered more by length of daily sunlight and a sudden, prolonged increase in atmospheric humidity rather than the soil's moisture, the eye-catching display can occur to varying degrees at other times during late spring and early summer, or be repeated into the fall when conditions are right.

It isn't just the attractive blooming qualities of the *Leucophyllum* that have led to their popularity in arid region landscapes from California across to Texas. Most of the species display attractive ashy gray or silvery, almost white foliage as indicated by the botanical name *Leuco* (gray) *phyllum* (leaf) and the popular Spanish name "cenizo" which means ashy.

Landscaping assets

The *Leucophyllum* species are small to medium sized evergreen shrubs with relatively regular mounding shapes, normally predictable by species at between 3 and 8 feet high and wide. Most impor-

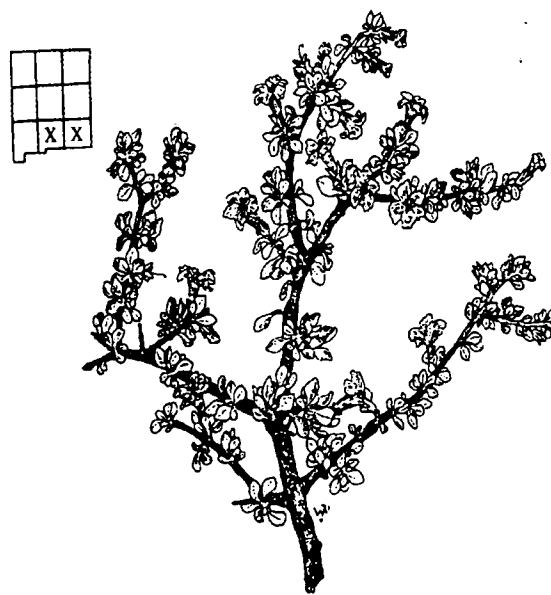
tantly, these plants are extremely drought tolerant and cold hardy; relish full sun and hot locations; thrive in poor, thin, rocky soils; and can take considerable abuse ranging from exhaust gasses in medians to mindless topiary pruning. In fact, from the landscaper's perspective, a *Leucophyllum* can just about walk on water (as long as the soil is well drained) and, to the relief of careless irrigators, established plantings can often survive long periods without any supplemental irrigation — even in areas with as little as 7 inches of annual rainfall.

Survival, however, is not the same as looking attractive, and occasional deep soakings during the hot dry weeks of late spring and summer, before the rainy season arrives, is always advisable. On the other hand, *overwatering* is to be studiously avoided. If a fault can be found with all the *Leucophyllum* species, it is their susceptibility to root rot when overwatered or placed in heavy, poorly drained soil.

Nursery grown cultivars and hybrids

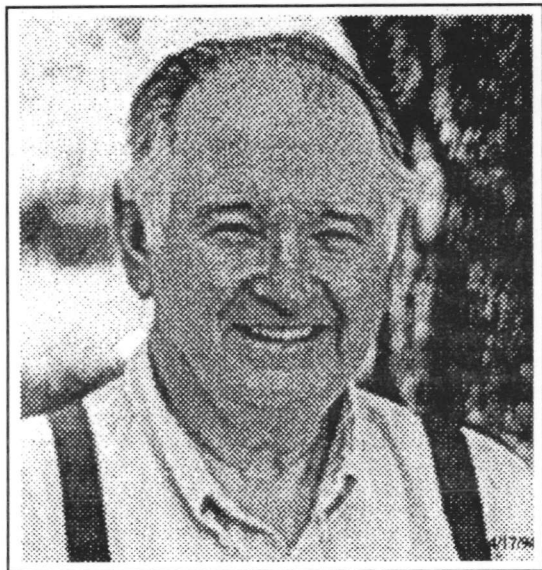
Three species are native from the central to northern half of the Chihuahuan Desert region and are naturally the most cold hardy of the group, although all commercially available species are rated to the mid to low teens when properly hardened for winter.

Of those northern Chihuahuan species, the most widely used horticulturally is *L. frutescens*, also commonly known as Texas Ranger. Long used for landscaping within its native Texas and northern



Lesser Texas Silverleaf *Leucophyllum minus*

Drawing by Wm. J. Underwood © 1997



Benny J. Simpson

Mexican range, it moved commercially across the rest of the southwest in the 1940s, and has become the standard against which most other desert landscape introductions have been subsequently measured.

L. frutescens now comes in several named horticultural varieties. '**Compacta**,' will generally keep to a manageable 5 x 5 feet. Others were introduced in the 1980s by legendary Texas horticulturalist, the late Benny J. Simpson of the Texas A&M Agricultural Experiment Station. His selections from the wild populations of *L. frutescens* in southwest Texas gave us '**Green Cloud**,' a green foliated cultivar of the normally silver leafed plant, and '**White Cloud**,' a white blooming deviate from the violet flowers that inspire the locally common name of Purple Sage for this large (to 8' or more) growing shrub.

Simpson also introduced two named cultivars of *L. candidum*, or Texas Silverleaf, selected from plants found in the Big Bend region of Texas. '**Silver Cloud**' is a tidy but stiffly branched selection whose striking silver foliage contrasts well with dark violet flowers. The other, '**Thunder Cloud**,' is similar but even more compact (to 3') and much more abundantly blooming. Both are useful as accents, especially in tight spaces too small for most other rain sages, and are great evergreen/evergray softeners among boulders in rockscapes or where the tight mass of silver white foliage provides a vivid contrast against darker shapes in the landscape.

The third northern Chihuahuan species, *L. minus* or Lesser Silverleaf, reaches further north than

any other *Leucophyllum*, ranging to just across the Texas border into southern New Mexico. It is found in the Hueco Mountains of southern Otero County, the dry flanks of the Guadalupe Mountains, and on scattered limestone outcrops elsewhere in southeastern New Mexico. In the wild, *L. minus* often exhibits a sparsely foliated, twiggy appearance, reflecting the harsh, dry, rocky limestone habitat it prefers, but it still retains the remarkable flowering characteristics of the genus and blooms with abandon after seemingly scant late summer rains. Unfortunately, the ashy gray spath-like to oval leaves and violet to lavender flowers tend to be both smaller and paler than those of *L. frutescens* and *L. candidum*.

Although it is not commercially available and only rarely found from specialty sources, the Texas Silverleaf was used by Simpson to increase the cold hardiness of the popular *L. frutescens*. A vigorous growing hybrid named '**Rain Cloud**' was produced to expand the use of cenizo to colder climates such as Albuquerque and Dallas.

Even though Lesser Silverleaf has been eclipsed by its larger, more robust and showier relatives to the south, in an irrigated setting with coarse, well drained soil, the foliage becomes fuller and richer, any exposed stiff gray stems become sculptural, and the once pale sun-bleached flowers take on a soft pastel glow that adds a new dimension to the garden. At least it seems that way in my garden!

So, if you find a source for seed or seedlings, don't pass it by. In fact, get extra for your friends and send some my way!

Wynn Anderson is curator of the Chihuahuan Desert Garden surrounding the Centennial Museum at the University of Texas in El Paso. The entrance was planted in 1992 and the larger gardens in the back were formerly opened in 1999. Wynn is constantly adding new species, and this garden promises to be a showplace for Chihuahuan Desert species.

There are now 7 species of *Leucophyllum* from the Chihuahuan Desert currently in the commercial nursery trade. An excellent review of these species, written by botanist and nurseryman Greg Starr of Tucson, is in the November 1993 issue of *Desert Plants*, published by the University of Arizona for the Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum.

(What is Native Plant? Cont'd from Front Page)

Russian thistle, yellow sweet clover, orchard grass, lilac, burdock, cosmos, hollyhock, and many other plants common in Taos County are not native here.

Native plants around Taos include sagebrush (often wrongly called non-native), piñon, ponderosa, blue grama, Indian ricegrass, wild blue iris, red willow, plains cottonwood, and golden currant.

So far, the natives still outnumber the non-natives in numbers of species, although the non-natives might control more square feet in gardens, on farmland, and along roadsides.

The real controversies as to what constitutes a native plant involve the following questions:

1. Is a plant native if it was transported out of its native range by Native Americans before 1492?
2. If the exact same species is transported from, say, Minnesota to Taos, is it no longer native? From Colorado? From Germany?
3. Is a plant native if it has been hybridized with another native?
4. Is a nursery selection (not hybridized) still native if it is planted in its original area?
5. If a plant that is native to, say, Douglas fir habitat in Taos County is planted in sage scrub in Taos County, where it must be watered to survive, is it still a native?
6. If a plant was documented as being native to New Mexico sage scrub in 1775 but is now extinct in our state, could you reintroduce it as a native with seed from a neighboring state?
7. If, according to pollen records, a plant was native to Taos during the last ice age but is now extinct, could it be reintroduced as native?

There are those (called purists) who follow the highest ethical rules when dealing with native plants. They even raise questions such as: Will

bergamont *Monarda fistulosa*, bought from a local nursery but propagated from Wisconsin stock, interbreed with our native *Monarda fistulosa* var. *menthifolia* and weaken the gene pool of our native species by making it less drought-tolerant?



Monarda fistulosa var. *menthifolia*
Drawing by Robert DeWitt Ivey

Then there are those who are a lot more, shall we say, flexible. They believe that anything that can make it in a garden with only weekly watering deserves to be used. If you want a tree in sage scrub, they say, add a tree. If watering the tree kills the native sage scrub, plant something that likes the new irrigation regimen.

The purists give native plant enthusiasts the reputation of being “plant nazis” and are called “doctrinaire.” They make most gardeners feel guilty and hostile.

But, if we follow the water-away and anything-goes policies of those “flexible” gardeners, won’t we continue to lose more and more of our native plants and native habitats?

How can we make this work?

Sally Wasowski is a landscape designer and author.

If you have an opinion on this subject, or anything else in this newsletter, send it to Letters to the Editor, P.O.Box 607, Arroyo Seco NM 87514, or e-mail to andrzej@laplaza.org.

Workshop on Northern New Mexico Flora Set For July 15th

"From Penstemon to Paintbrush" is the title of a one-day workshop conducted by John Ubelaker, Professor and Chair of Biological Sciences at Southern Methodist University, and a member of the Taos Chapter of NPSNM. His botanical work centers on north-central New Mexico.

The workshop will be lecture-style, and will review specimens of the *Scrophalceae* family collected by students and faculty of the SMU-in-Taos summer sessions. A booklet covering uses of the plants by Native Americans will be included.

Course fee is \$30. (No charge for members of the Taos Chapter) For more information, or to register, call SMU-in-Taos at 505-758-8322.

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CREATING AND ENHANCING BETTER OUTDOOR SPACE

Don't Lose Touch With Nature

by Steve Domigan LA
Taos Chapter

Nature is the background for all human activity, and as humans we are blessed with the intellectual capability to manipulate our environment into anything we want it to be. We have chalked up some successes in that endeavor and we have also created some disasters. Throughout the process of evolving our living spaces, cities and roadways, we've become absorbed with the power of technology and consequently neglected our human needs. Our deepest instincts have been violated, and our basic human desires remain unsatisfied.

The process of experiencing anything involves the response of our senses. As humans we love the fresh air in our lungs; dry paths under our feet; the penetrating heat of the sun on our skin; the smell and feel of the rich, warm earth; the taste and sparkle of clear, cool water; the refreshing coolness of foliage overhead and the spacious blue dome of the sky. We are unique among animals in our yearning for order and beauty. Instinctively we seek harmony, while disorder, friction, ugliness and the illogical repel us.

The central objective of all physical planning is to create a more secure, effective, pleasant and rewarding way of life. Ideally this environment will be one of order and beauty, but it also must be dynamic and expanding, changing as our requirements change. Landscape design is strongly tied to scenic quality and visual sensitivity, and involves more than placing trees, shrubs, and other plants on the property. Its focus is the land and the interrelationship of man-made and natural elements which occur or have been introduced upon it. A landscape design concentrates on the shape and shaping, what does and can grow on it – and the spaces thus created.

Starting with the natural landscape as the basis for all planning, other subjects for consideration include: the site, climate, the visible landscape, spatial character, existing and proposed structures in the landscape, circulation patterns in relationship to the landscape, and water – its qualities as well as its supply and use in the landscape composition. The design also details the conscious arrangement or organization of outdoor space for the satisfaction of your family.

Consider:

- * Hobbies/special interests of family members
- * Edible, productive aspects of the landscape
- * Cut flowers for ornamentation

- * Outdoor/entertainment areas
- * Play space for children
- * Absence of or minimal lawn areas

Design expression refers to the appropriateness of form and function in answering the needs of a specific problem; it accommodates a variety of balance, geometric unities and scale. It must also consider our habits, responses and impulses - however, this alone is not enough. It also must deal with ideas and accommodate our functional requirements. Good design must delight and inspire those who experience the final product.

The utilization of native plants in a landscape – either through preservation of what occurs in its specific context, or through reintroduction – retains and amplifies a landscape's natural character. People are drawn to New Mexico because of the beauty and drama of its natural landscape. As stewards of this landscape and with our storehouse of knowledge, we have the ability to create on earth a veritable garden paradise. We are failing and will continue to fail as long as our plans are conceived in heavy-handed violation of nature and nature's principles. We must pay attention to topography, topsoil, air currents, watersheds, forces, forms and features; respecting and responding to them, and adapting them to a purpose. We must develop a deeper understanding of our physical and spiritual ties to the earth.



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I BRAKE FOR Wildflowers

Bumper sticker available from Taos Chapter

An "I Break for Wildflowers" bumper sticker, designed by Sandra Ross, is now available in fire red and emerald green against a white vinyl background. A proven money-maker, this bumper sticker is being offered to NPSNM chapters at \$1.00 each with a minimum order of 25, plus \$3 S&H for first 25. Add \$2.00 for each additional 25. Suggested retail price is \$2.00 each. To order, send a check made out to the Taos Native Plant Society, to Stickers, Rt. Box 30C, Vadito NM 87579.

NPSNM BOARD HAS BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE WEEKEND

Ten members of the NPSNM Board of Directors, plus newsletter editor Andy Wasowski, Website manager Jane Mygatt, and eleven members and guests met February 5th and 6th at the Sevilleta Wildlife Refuge and UNM Long Term Research Facility north of Socorro.

Membership

Mary Goodman, Membership Chair, reported 668 memberships (852 including family members) as of Feb 5th. 72 new members joined us as of the first of the year; including 17 in the new Ruidoso area chapter (Sacramento Mountains), and 29 from the Gila Chapter which has revised chapter by-laws that require membership in the state organization. The current membership represents an increase of 78 over the past year. Mary reported that in 1999, 80 members contributed \$25.00 or more to the Friends of the Society category.

Annual Meeting 2000

John Freyermuth of the Las Cruces Chapter submitted an outline of plans for the Annual Meeting which that chapter will host September 29th through October 1st. The chapter has adopted the theme, "Working for a Growing Understanding of the Chihuahuan Desert" and issued a call for presentations.

Revised By-Laws

Bob Sivinski, NPSNM By-Laws Committee Chair, presented proposed changes to the state's by-laws. After discussion and suggestions from those present and a hearing of comments received from absentees, the amended and restated by-laws were approved. Once printed in the revised form, these by-laws will be available to members submitting written request.

New Chapter

Eight officers and members of the new Sacramento Mountains Chapter (Ruidoso area) attended the meeting and were unanimously voted in as the ninth chapter of NPSNM.

Proposals

A proposal for a new publication tentatively titled *Southern Rocky Mountain Plants for Gardens* was presented by Sally Wasowski, Taosd Chapter. A second proposal was presented by Bob Sivinski for a two and a-half day grasses workshop, to be conducted by Dr. Kelly Allred, NMSU.

Three external proposals for funding were approved:

- * Friends of the Oliver Lee State Park for botanical ID signs along walks
- * Chihuahuan Desert Nature Park for educational materials for visiting teachers and students (partial funding)
- * The UNM Herbarium for the continuation of the computerization of the herbarium collections. These funds will be distributed when the minutes of the Board Meeting are approved.

The next meeting of the NPSNM Board of Directors will be held during the Annual Meeting in Las Cruces Sept 29-Oct 1, 2000.



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BUTTERFLY GARDEN WORKSHOP SET FOR MAY 13th IN SANTA FE

Steve Cary and Nancy Daniel, Santa Fe Chapter

New Mexico is home to some 300 different butterfly species, 299 of which are non-migratory and lesser known than the spectacular monarch but are equally interesting.

However, this number is poised to decline as land is cleared for more shopping malls, parking lots and housing developments, and we continue to spray crops and home landscapes with herbicides and insecticides. As natural habitats dwindle, our butterflies have less chance to maintain their fragile existence.

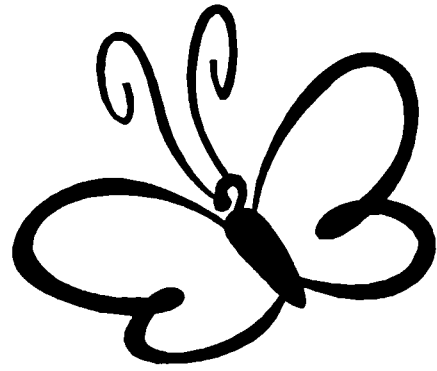
To The Rescue

Many people are doing their part to reverse this trend by planting butterfly gardens which highlight and support the ecological relationships between native plants and animals. Some gardens are large and elaborate, but even a small backyard full of flowers can provide nectar needed by local and migrant butterflies.

A butterfly garden is not only easy, but fun and rewarding, too, as the plants mature and more butterflies come to visit. Adult butterflies need food, water, sun, shade, and shelter from wind during their brief adulthood — an average of only 6 to 10 days. They find sustenance mainly from flower nectar, while pollinating those flowers.

Reproduction

Within the butterfly's life cycle, the role of adults is to reproduce. Each mated female lays approximately 500 eggs, usually one at a time and normally on a particular plant species, or related group of plants. These are known as larval hosts. Each egg hatches into a caterpillar (or larva) that needs food to be readily available because it cannot move very far or very fast. So for each species of butterfly, the female places her eggs on just the right parts of just the right plant. If you want to be the consummate host, your butterfly garden should include the proper plants on which the females can place their eggs. In fact, the plants you put in your garden will determine which butterflies you get.



Each tiny caterpillar starts life eating, and keeps eating, shedding several skins and increasing its mass by about 20,000 times before becoming a chrysalis. Only about 1 percent of the eggs survive to adulthood.

The Workshop

The more familiar you are with the butterflies in your area, and their preferred nectar sources and larval hosts, the greater pleasure you will derive from your butterfly garden. An excellent way to gain that familiarity is to attend the *Butterfly Gardening Workshop at the Randall Davey Audubon Center, on Saturday, May 13th, from 8:45 am to 4:00 pm*

This workshop will include an enjoyable mix of classroom instruction and hands-on experience. Indoors we will see dazzling slides and discuss mating habits (of butterflies!), pollination, and how to attract butterflies. Outdoors we will learn how to design a butterfly garden, guard against erosion, prepare the soil and beds, install plants, and distribute mulch. By day's end we hope to present the Randall Davey Audubon Center with a viable butterfly garden that will be beautiful as well as functional, and will help them fulfill their environmental education mission far into the future. If you are already familiar with traditional gardening techniques, your participation will be especially valuable.

The cost is \$40.00 per person (50 percent of which can be listed as a donation). Lunch, all plants, materials and tools will be provided. Bring work gloves and water or other beverages to accompany lunch. Workshop registration is limited to 25 people and you must register with a non-refundable \$20 by May 5th. If fewer than 15 people are registered by the end of business on May 5th, the workshop will be canceled. *Call the RDAC at 505-983-4609 for more information or to register.*

Five Butterfly Counts Fluttering to Meadows Near You!

Butterflies indicate ecological health; their diversity and numbers change when habitats are disturbed. These changes are monitored by butterfly counts. New Mexico counts are supported by the NPSNM and the New Mexico State Parks, and need your participation. Bring sturdy footwear, sun protection, lunch and water. Insect nets, field guides, binoculars and cameras are optional. Counts can last all day and cover several miles. State Park parking is \$4 per vehicle. Supervised kids have a great time.

8th Annual Los Alamos Butterfly Count

June 21, Wednesday 7 PM. Orientation slide show at Mesa Public Library.

June 24, Saturday 9 AM. Burnt Mesa, State Hwy 4, Bandelier National Monument. For details, call Dorothy Hoard at (505) 662-2662

2nd Annual Sugarite Canyon–Dorothey Lake Count

June 24, Saturday 8:30 PM. Orientation slide show at Soda Pocket Theatre, Sugarite Canyon State Park.

June 25, Sunday 8:00 am. First group starts at Dorothey Lake parking lot. Second group starts at Pocket Theatre. Call Pearl Sandstrom at (719) 543-6427

9th Annual Santa Fe Butterfly Count

July 5, Wednesday 8:30 PM. Orientation slide show at Lodge, Hyde State Park

July 8, Saturday, 8:15 AM. Assemble at Hyde Park office. Call Steve Cary (505) 827-1183

1st Annual Manzano Mountains Butterfly Count

July 8, Saturday 8:30 PM. Orientation slide show at Group Shelter, Manzano Mountains State Park

July 9, Sunday 8:30 AM. Manzano Mountains State Park. MMSP (505) 847-2820 or Steve Cary (505) 827-1183

3rd Annual Albuquerque Bosque Butterfly Count

Sept. 9, Saturday 8:30 AM. Orientation Rio Grande Nature Center State Park. Count follows orientation slide show at 9:30 AM. Call Nature Center (505) 344-7240 or Steve Cary (505) 827-1183.

We recommend that participants attend the slide orientations prior to taking part in the counts.

*“In our every deliberation,
we must consider the impact
of our decisions on the next
seven generations.”*

Great Law of the Iroquois Nation

AD RATES FOR NPSNM NEWSLETTER

The NPSNM Board approved the following advertising rates for the state newsletter. These rates cover 4 issues of the newsletter plus inclusion in our Web-site for a year:

Business card size	\$100.00
Double business card	\$175.00
1/4 page (5" x 3 1/2")	\$225.00
4 line listing in professional directory	\$35.00

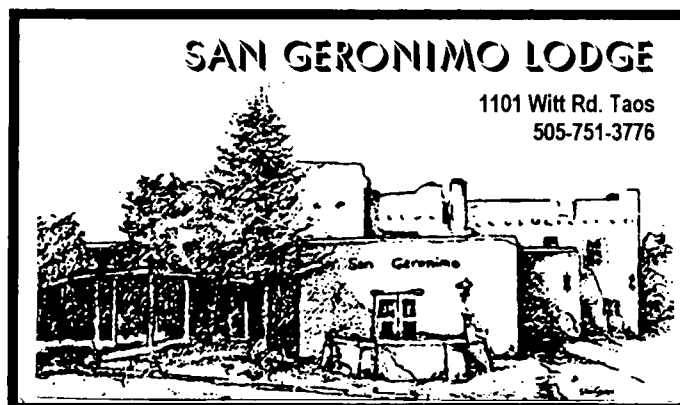
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The **NEWSLETTER** is published quarterly by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The Society is composed of professional and amateur botanists and others with an interest in the flora of New Mexico. Original articles from the Newsletter may be reprinted if attributed to the author and this 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. We encourage the use of suitable native plants in landscaping to preserve the state's unique character and as a water conservation measure.

Members benefit from chapter meetings, field trips, publications, plant and seed exchanges, and educational forums. In addition, a wide selection of books dealing with plants, landscaping, and other environmental issues is available at discount prices. The Society has also produced two New Mexico wildflower posters by artist Niki Threlkeld which can be ordered by contacting our Poster Chair or Book Sales representative.

See page 5 for all Society Contacts.

Membership Fees

Dues are \$12 annually for individuals or families.

Organizations, businesses and individuals who wish to support the Society's activities and long range goals may contribute \$25 annually as "Friends of the Society."

To join us, please send your dues to:

Membership Secretary NPSNM
P.O.Box 5917
Santa Fe NM 87502-5917

Newsletter Contributions

Please direct all articles, letters-to-the-editor, as well as suggestions for articles and writers, to:

Newsletter Editor
P.O.Box 607

Arroyo Seco NM 87514

Or e-mail at andrzej@laplaza.org

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