

# Native Plant Society of New Mexico

## *NEWSLETTER*

April-June 2001    Volume XXVI Number 2

### Bill Neiman to Keynote Annual Meeting in Taos

No relation to that other Texas Neiman (the guy with the big store), Bill is a passionate — make that *very* passionate — advocate for native plants and natural landscaping. With his wife, Jan, Bill owns and runs Native American Seed in Junction, Texas, and has earned a reputation throughout the Lone Star State for being outspoken about environmental issues and the role native plants can play in making this a better planet. After getting hooked on natives, he converted his Neiman's Nursery in Flower Mound, Texas, to one of the very first native nurseries in the State. This was not an undertaking without some risk; interest in native plants was only just beginning to arise. From 1979 to 1990, his nursery was an important native plant resource for North Central Texas. *Cont'd on page 14*



### El Paso NPS joins NPSNM!

**It's official! The NPSNM Board of Directors votes to approve the El Paso NPS's petition to become our 10th Chapter.**

"The fact that El Paso is on the Texas side of the border is unimportant," said Bob Sivinski, NPSNM President. "We have the flora, climate and so many active members in common. Both organizations will benefit from this union." Factors that attracted the El Paso group to us rather than affiliation with the Texas NPS are: shorter travel distances, a common regional flora, and our excellent book sales and workshop programs.

NPSNM gains a large membership potential — over 100 members in El Paso, 20 of whom will immediately be NPSNM members.

Current El Paso officers are: Sarah Wood, President; Wynn Anderson, V.P., Editor of *Xerophyte*, their bi-monthly newsletter; and Suzan Williams, Secretary-Treasurer. Wynn Anderson is also the El Paso Chapter Rep and can be reached at 915-533-6072 or by email at [wanderson@utep.edu](mailto:wanderson@utep.edu).

Look for information on El Paso activities on our website: <http://npsnm.unm.edu>.

## **INSIDE**

**Annual Meeting Info**  
**More From Bob Sivinski**  
**Under-used Ash**  
**Book Review**  
**Workshops**  
**And Much More**

## Meet Bob Sivinski Part Two

The conclusion of a two-part interview with our new president, Bob Sivinski.

**Newsletter:** *Every organization has assets as well as liabilities. What are ours? And what will you do to confront them?*

**Bob:** Our most cherished assets are the members who donate their time and skills to the programs and progress of the Society. Our biggest asset is the remarkable native plant diversity of New Mexico. A lot of native plant interest is inspired by our wonderful flora. I can't think of any liabilities, but I could mention one failing. That is, few of New Mexico's professional botanists and biologists belong to, or are active in, NPSNM. These people could offer a lot of help and expertise to our educational goals. We have made some recent progress in enrolling professionals, but I need to do more arm twisting and convince them that NPSNM is much more than a garden club.

**Newsletter:** *Where do you see NPSNM down the road? At the end of your term? In five years? Ten years?*

**Bob:** I don't foresee any great changes at the end of my two-year term, but I would like to see an increase in opportunities for member participation. For the future, my crystal ball shows a financially endowed NPSNM with an office and paid staff that focuses on botanical education, habitat conservation, and native plant gardening through numerous publications, training programs, and demonstration gardens. We can do it if we continue to grow, pursue grants, and partner with educational institutions and other like-minded organizations.

**Newsletter:** *Some people believe that having native plant societies set up as state organizations is the wrong way to go. They say that it would be better to have regional societies, such as a Chihuahuan Desert Society or a Rocky Mountain Society. The El Paso Native Plant Society, as an example, feels a closer kinship with New Mexico than with Texas. Any thoughts on this?*

**Bob:** A state organization is convenient because nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations must be legally incorporated by a state corporation commission. For those with more parochial interests, subdivision into chapters has adequately covered all but one (Great Plains) of New Mexico's five floristic regions. I personally prefer belonging to a large state society like NPSNM because I can enjoy Society activities within several different regional floras rather than just one.

If I could go back in time, I would lobby for the formation of a large Southwestern Native Plant Society with regional chapters across several states. I think it's too late for that now as most states have successful societies of their own. Floristic regions do not stop at state lines and I will encourage NPSNM chapters to collaborate with like chapters in adjacent states.

Our past joint activities with the El Paso Native Plant Society and the Amarillo chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas strengthened our bonds with the Chihuahuan Desert and the short-grass prairie. I hope to continue these relationships, and also establish new native plant friendships in Arizona and Colorado. As to your comment about the El Paso Native Plant Society — I see no reason why we shouldn't welcome them into our Society if they wish to join us. *(See Front Page Story)*

## FROM THE BOOK OF ROCHELLE

My friend, Rochelle Whiteman, up in Milwaukee, is one of the Landscaping Revolutionaries I profiled in my book, *The Landscaping Revolution*. In the book, she relates an ancient Hebrew story which I would like to share with you.

The story declares that the planting of a tree to be a good deed of such a high order that even if the Messiah were to arrive at that moment, it would be incumbent on the individual to continue planting the tree.

Rochelle gleefully adds, "It is doubtful if this would hold true for a man mowing his lawn."

**POINT...COUNTERPOINT**

**"Taking care of my lawn is my daily therapy."**

*George Robinson  
St. Louis homeowner*

**"I think that maintaining a lawn is one of the most evil practices of the upper and middle classes."**

*Lorrie Otto  
Founder of The Wild Ones*

This NEWSLETTER is published quarterly by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, a nonprofit organization, and is free to members. The NPSNM 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 to this Newsletter. Views expressed are the opinions of the individual authors and not necessarily NPSNM. Manuscripts and artwork are welcome and should be submitted to the editor:

*POBox 607, Arroyo Seco NM 87514  
andrze@laplaza.org*

**Deadline for next issue is June 1st, 2001**

**Membership** in the NPSNM is open to anyone supporting our goals, i.e., 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 our 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.

**NPSNM Membership Application**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail/Fax \_\_\_\_\_

*I (we) wish to affiliate with the checked chapter*

- Albuquerque  
 Carlsbad  
 El Paso  
 Gila (Silver City)  
 Las Cruces  
 Otero  
 Sacramento Mts (Ruidoso)  
 San Juan (Farmington)  
 Santa Fe  
 Taos

*I am interested in forming a new chapter in*

**Annual Dues:**

Individual or family.....	\$20.00
Friend of the Society.....	\$30.00
Supporting Member.....	\$50.00
Sponsor.....	\$100.00
Benefactor.....	\$500.00
Life Member.....	\$1,000.00
Limited Income Family, Senior (65 & over) and Students.....	\$12.00

Endowment contribution      \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total**                                      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

***Make your check payable to***

**NPSNM**

***and send to***

**Membership Secretary**

**P.O.Box 2364, Las Cruces NM 88004**

## Letters to the Editor

### Newsletter No Place for Politics

In the last NPSNM Newsletter your editorial asked for reader input. I agree with those who wrote to you suggesting the Point/Counter Point feature in the Winter issue was too political. I am convinced that our newsletter should not be open to any such propaganda. We hear and read enough in the mass media.

It does not matter whether someone is a Republican, Democrat, Communist, or Green. Political bias simply has no place in the arena of preservation and conservation of native flora. Bush and Williamson may pique environmental questions, but by running those kinds of quotes, we (as an organization) run the chance of offending either one side or the other, and it is imperative that we not do that. We want our voice to be heard, and if we offend someone enough, we run the risk of them discontinuing their membership to the NPSNM; our audience walks out.

Additionally, I resent the implication you made in your editorial that our by-laws "make us environmentalists." I do not like the connotation the word "environmentalist" brings to mind. Although I do have strong environmental concerns, I would deny being an environmentalist. Instead, I would much prefer to be labeled a conservationist.

*Kathy Whiteman, Gila Chapter.*

### On the Other Hand...

Please continue to run your editorials and make your quotations. The newsletter ought to be a forum. If people don't like your commentary, print their letters! Your passion comes out in the newsletter! It's passion that drives the Society! It would be unforgivable for your passion to be silenced.

I also want to comment on the glyphosate article. It was very appropriate. I once got in trouble with a boss who had asked me to assist a man from the Plant Materials Center in Los Lunas. I was supposed to hold the individual plants so he could spray them with Round-Up. Neither he nor I had been given gloves or masks. My ex-boss insisted that Round-Up was a safe herbicide and that my fears were unfounded.

*Jim McGrath, Albuquerque Chapter*

Surely to no one's surprise, I totally endorse the comments you wrote in your editorial for the last NPS newsletter. For years NPS has not fulfilled its total role well when it comes to activism in plant and habitat protection. I have felt so heartened with the movement of the Society along these lines in the past couple of years. Jack Carter deserves so much credit for raising our thinking about conservation in a positive way. Personally I would like to see a regular article, likely from the Conservation Chair, about current concerns in New Mexico. It has been a long time since we have had a "Conservation Corner" or a column devoted to conservation issues. I would love to see this addition to the newsletter. Meantime, the brief quotes you are providing are welcome and encouraged by this member.

*Thomas Wootten, Cortaro AZ*  
*Conservation Corner begins this issue on pg 14.*

I agree with your point of view. Yes, we do have a strong mixture of views within our organization, yet we all can learn from other opinions. Overpopulation and other environmental issues, in my opinion, are often time bombs that need to be explored. Of course, at the same time both sides of the issue should be included. Keep up the great work.

*John Stockert, Otero Chapter*

I applaud your initiative in using the newsletter as a vehicle to keep members apprised of things like Monsanto's misinformation regarding glyphosates. I want to thank you for doing your part to dispel erroneous, harmful information. This is the reason I became a member of the Native Plant Society – to learn from and associate with those of like mind, who do, in action and word, take a stand for endangered species, conserving water, eliminating toxic chemicals from our landscapes and saving habitats for threatened wildlife.

*Trish London, Gila Chapter*



**Blossoms**  
**GARDEN CENTER**

Dan 'Vish' & Claudia 'Uma' Miller

118 STATE RD. 240

505-758-1330

P.O. BOX 2500 RANCHOS DE TAOS, NM 87557

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Send Membership Dues & Changes of Address to:  
Membership Secretary NPSNM  
P.O.Box 2364, Las Cruces NM 88004**

## Editorial

Your responses to certain quotes that were used in a past issue, as well as my editorial in the last issue, were real eye-openers. In case anyone is under the impression that we are a homogeneous, like-minded organization, the letters and emails I received (pro and con) told me in no uncertain terms that our membership reflects our population as a whole.

We are Democrats and Republicans and Independents and Greens, left and right and right up the middle. And as I think about it, that is a very healthy composition for us to have. All too often, organizations founded on a single issue find themselves talking to themselves and no one else. They are preaching to the choir. And in doing so, they forget or ignore the fact that others of differing views may have a lot to contribute.

This was brought home to me recently when I received an email from an organization that I never imagined existed — REP America, REP standing for Republicans for Environmental Protection. And if you think this is an oxymoron, as I admittedly did, then perhaps this just goes to show that we may have been too smug and self-congratulatory in our environmentalist stance.

Albee, my accountant, and a Republican in no uncertain terms, once told me that, "environmentalism is too important to be a one party issue; we *all* inhabit this planet!" But I just assumed that Albee was an anomaly.

I shouldn't have. After all, it was a Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, who said, "Conservation is a great moral issue, for it involves the patriotic duty of ensuring the safety and continuance of the nation." He might have said, "...of the world," but I guess people weren't thinking in global terms back then.

But *we* should be thinking that way, and more and more I believe we are. So I was greatly encouraged to hear about REP America, and to read statements such as this one from Republican Senator Bob Smith of New Hampshire, "It's not anti-conservative to be pro-environment."

For any of you interested in knowing more about REP America, check out their web site: [www.repamerica.org](http://www.repamerica.org).

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# Chapter Activities & Events

## ALBUQUERQUE

Meetings held at the Albuquerque Garden Center (except December), 10120 Lomas NE at 7:30 p.m.

**April 5.** *"The Newly Created Valles Caldera National Preserve."* Denise McCaig, Assistant Director of Wilderness Management, SW Region, US Forest Service.

**April 28.** Native Plant Sale in conjunction with the Albuquerque Garden Center. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**May 3.** Presentations by winners of Science Fair Projects which involve native plants. Awards sponsored by Albuquerque Chapter. Reception to follow.

**May 5.** Saturday Field Trip: Flora and Vegetation of White Sands Missile Range, led by David Lee Anderson, ecologist and Land Mgr for W.S.M.R. Visit to sites in northern area of Range.

**June 7.** *"An Introduction to New Mexico Wetlands"* given by Jim McGrath, field botanist and former wetlands biological technician.

## GILA (Silver City)

Meetings 7 p.m. in Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus

**April 20.** *"Fire Management in the National Forest,"* Paul Boucher, Acting Fire Mgt. Officer Gila Nat'l Forest.

**April 22.** Field Trip to Spring Canyon State Park south of Deming.

**May 20.** Field Trip to Nature Conservancy's Beat Mt. Lodge.

**June 17.** Field Trip to San Francisco River area near Glenwood, led by Frank Kirshner.

For details call Judy Muncrief at 388-4771

## LAS CRUCES

Programs and Meetings are at Southwest Environmental Center, 1494 S. Solano Dr.

**April 11, 7 p.m.** *"Creepy Crawlers Nobody Loves,"* Paul Hyder. Slides and live critters to touch!

**April 14, 9 a.m.** Field Trip to Mahoney Park in the Florida Mts. Meet at Fairacres P.O. Parking Lot. Mostly driving, with stops and easy hiking. Led by Terry Peterson.

**May 9, 7 p.m.** *"Natural Resource Management at White Sands Missile Range,"* Doug Burkett.

**May 12, 4 p.m.** Annual Chapter Garden Tour, includes gardens of Jane and Ed Mount and Peter Peterson. Potluck at the Petersons.

**May 19 and 20.** Field trip to Boyce Thompson Arboretum in SW Arizona. 35 acres of arid region plants from around the world. Details TBA.

**June 13, 7 p.m.** *"Grassland Birds,"* Martha Desmond, Dept of Wildlife and Fishery Service, NMSU.

**June 16, 8 a.m.** Field Trip to Jornada Experimental Range, led by Paul Hyder. Meet at K-Mart parking lot on Hwy 70.

## OTERO

**April 7, 7 p.m.** *"Following the Trail of E.O. Wootton,"* given by Dr. Kelly Allred of NM State University (Las Cruces) at the NM School of the Visually Handicapped in Alamogordo.

**April 26-27, 28-29.** Cactus Workshop. See Page 16 for details.

**May 12.** Annual Plant Sale by the Otero Chapter at the Garden Center across 10th Street from the Library in Alamogordo. Begins 8:30 a.m.

**May 19.** Guided tour (all day) across restricted military land to top of Salinas Peak and into some nearby canyons by Dave Anderson, botanist for White Sands Missile Range. Four-wheel drive required. Reservations are required. As of February 21 no spaces are left, however, cancellations may occur. If you're interested in being placed on a waiting list, contact John Stockert ASAP at 505/585-2546.

**June 16.** Phil Wiborg leads hike along Grand View Trail, about 1-1/2 miles in length. Trail follows an old railroad bed and has grand views of the Tularosa Basin and the San Andres Mountains in the background, including Salinas Peak. Meet at the new High Rolls Post Office (behind the only gas station on US 82 in High Rolls) at 9 a.m.

For questions on programs and field trips, contact Jean Dodd 505/434-3041.

## SACRAMENTO MTS (Ruidoso)

**April 21 or 28.** *"Noxious Weeds,"* slide show by John Connor. Call Betsy Hall at 258-2440 to confirm time and date.

**May 12.** Field Trip, location and leader TBA.

**May 26-27.** Chapter booth at Mayfair in Cloudcroft.

**June 23.** Field Trip. Location and leader TBA.

The NPSNM Board of Directors approved the chapter's request for a grant to create an educational landscaping project at the Nob Hill Early Childhood Center in Ruidoso. Planning for the project has begun and work days will be schedule as soon as the area is ready to plant.

*Cont'd page 14*

# EARTH, AIR, FIRE & WATER

## AN ELEMENTAL LOOK AT TAOS COUNTY ANNUAL MEETING AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2001

**Taos is a legendary art colony, a popular ski resort, and an exciting year round tourist destination. Taos has numerous great restaurants to match any taste and budget, world class art galleries, tons of local charm, and breath-taking natural beauty. It's a fitting locale to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of our Society.**

Even if you've never attended a State Meeting before, you'll want to make plans to be here in August. The Taos Chapter has put together an outstanding slate of speakers, fabulous field trips, and a silent auction that shows off the best of Taos arts and crafts.

The recently remodeled Kachina Lodge will be our home during the 4-day event, and its an easy stroll to and from the picturesque Taos Town Plaza.

### THE KACHINA LODGE

413 PASEO DEL PUEBLO NORTE  
TAOS 87571

The owners and staff of this Taos landmark have promised us an all-out effort to make our annual meeting one to remember. The meeting rooms and other facilities are ideal for our purposes, and as an added bonus, a full hot buffet breakfast comes free with your room. Our special rate of \$69.00 can also be applied to Wednesday night for early arrivals, and Sunday night for those who may wish to stay in town a bit longer.

**Call for Reservations at 505-758-2275**

### ANNUAL MEETING T-SHIRT

Lisa Mandelkern, Las Cruces, did such an outstanding job designing the T-shirt for last year's annual meeting, that Taos asked her to design this year's as well. It will be long-sleeved (better sun protection) and will feature a piñon motif drawn by Robert DeWitt Ivey. Order yours when you register to be sure to get one.

### OVERVIEW OF THE MEETING

#### THURSDAY, AUGUST 16<sup>TH</sup>.

7:30 a.m. Early Bird Field Trip:  
Botany & Butterflies

#### FRIDAY, AUGUST 17<sup>TH</sup>

9 a.m. State Board Meeting  
9 a.m. Registration, set up of exhibits, silent auction table, raffle, and book sales.  
1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Presentations  
6 p.m. Open House at Sally and Andy Wasowski's home, co-hosted by Los Jardineros, Taos Gardening Club.

#### SATURDAY, AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>

8 a.m. Registration  
9 a.m. to Noon. Presentations  
Noon to 1:30 p.m. Lunch on your own  
1:30 p.m. Presentations  
3:30 p.m. Landscaping Panel Discussion.  
4:30 p.m. Silent Auction and Raffle  
6:30 p.m. Barbecue Banquet and Keynoter

#### SUNDAY, AUGUST 19<sup>TH</sup>

Field Trips. For starting times, check list on pages 9-10

### LOS JARDINEROS TO SPONSOR FRIDAY EVENING SOCIAL

The Taos Gardening Club, Los Jardineros, will sponsor and co-host the Friday evening get together, to be held at the Valdez home of Sally and Andy Wasowski. Stephen Domigan, who is a member of the Taos Chapter, is also President of Los Jardineros. The Taos Chapter is, of course, very appreciative of this wonderful gesture. Maps to the Wasowski home will be available at the registration table.

# SPEAKERS & TOPICS

## FRIDAY, AUGUST 17TH

**1:00 p.m. An Environmental Picture of Taos County from the Last Ice Age to 1900:**

Arrival of sage scrub, effects of natural change, and impact of human beings on the System. Skip Keith Miller, teacher, writer, curator, potter, and historian, Taos.

**2:00 p.m. An Overview of the Three Main Forest Habitats in Taos County:** Piñon-juniper, Ponderosa, and Douglas fir-mixed conifer.

John Ubelaker, professor of biology at SMU, director at Fort Burgwin.

**3:00 p.m. Alpine Habitats.** David Witt, curator, Harwood Museum of University of New Mexico, Taos.

**4:00 p.m. Northern New Mexico's High Country Butterflies:** Habits, Habitats, and Adaptations. Steve Cary, Chief Naturalist, NM State Parks, Santa Fe.



## SATURDAY, AUGUST 18TH

**8:00 a.m. Birds of Taos County:** A Natural History. Mary Alice Root, Adjunct Naturalist, New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science, Albuquerque.

**9:00 a.m. The Acequia Systems of Taos County:** Their history, construction, maintenance, and political realities. Alfred Trujillo, Acequia Commissioner, Arroyo Hondo.

**10:00 a.m. The Relationship of the Four Elements to Human and Environmental Health:** Richard DeerTrack, a member of Taos Pueblo and co-founder with Leah Shinbach of Cross-Cultural Communication Project. Leah Shinbach is a Physicians Assistant, Isis Medicine, Santa Fe.

**11:00 a.m. The Rio Grande: A Plumbing System or a Healthy River?** Present day management, and the consequences for future generations. Brian Shields, Executive Director, Amigos Bravos, Taos.

**Noon Lunch break on your own.** Walk to many restaurants or motel shuttle available to Plaza.

**1:30 p.m. Weather in Taos County and Northern New Mexico:** past, present, and what the future might bring. Dave Gutzler, meteorologist, UMN, Taos.

**2:30 p.m. Fire Management: How to Live Safely in Native Woodlands.** Chick Keller, who lost his home in the Los Alamos fire, former director of Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, Los Alamos. **FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**3:30-5 p.m. Panel Discussion: How to Garden with Native Plants in the Southern Rockies.**

\* **Judith Phillips**, landscape designer, horticulturist, author, owner of Bernado Beach Native Plant Farm, Albuquerque.

\* **Bob Pennington**, horticulturist, Agua Fria Nursery, Santa Fe.

\* **Stephen Domigan**, landscape architect, Taos.

\* **Virginia Black**, dedicated gardener in Taos for over 2 decades.

\* **Alex Tonnesen**, Western Native Seed, Coaldale, CO.

**Moderator, Sally Wasowski**, author, landscape designer, Taos.

**FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

### EVENING ACTIVITIES

**6:30 p.m.** Barbecue Banquet  
**7:15 p.m.** Piñon Nut Birthday Cake to Celebrate NPSNM's 25th Year.  
**7:30 p.m.** Keynote Address: Title: "*Looking Back...Looking In...Looking Out: Our Impact on the Next Several Generations*" Bill Neiman, owner of Native American Seed, Junction, TX.



## FIELD TRIPS

ALL FIELD TRIPS START AT THE KACHINA LODGE. BRING LOTS OF WATER AND LUNCH OR SNACK WHERE APPROPRIATE.

### Special Pre-conference Field Trip on Thursday, August 16

#### **Early Bird: Botany and Butterflies**

Hike up toward Gold Hill via the Long Canyon trail ending the hike at treeline at 11,800 feet. This is a long strenuous day hike, 8 miles round trip and 2,500 feet of elevation gain. It follows a stream most of the way and passes through what the hiking book describes as "a beautiful wildflower garden with a creek tumbling through it." Hikers have the option of continuing to the top of Gold Hill, another 3 miles round-trip and 900 vertical feet.

**Meet at 7:30 a.m. Leaders: Robert DeWitt Ivey and Steve Cary.**

### Sunday, August 19 Field Trips

#### **1.) Wildflowers of the Spruce-Fir Sub Alpine Forest**

High adventure trip into the Pecos Wilderness examines wildflowers and ecology around Serpent Lake (11,800 feet). Expect a long day and a strenuous trip. The drive must begin at 7 a.m. due to the length of time needed to get to trail head. Elevation gain to the Lake is around 1000 feet and round-trip distance is probably around 8 miles. Driving plus hiking time could reach ten hours.

**Meet at 6:50 a.m. Limited to 10. Leader: David L. Witt.**

#### **2.) Wildflower Meadow**

Hike the Elliott Barker trail from Flechado Pass up to a great meadow with a stream and with good views of Taos Mountain (9,700 feet).

This is an easy to moderate hike of less than 5 miles and an elevation gain of 700 feet.

**Meet at 8 a.m. Leader: Robert DeWitt Ivey.**

#### **3.) Sage Scrub**

A sage scrub field trip through the Stagecoach Hills featuring rolling terrain, great views and, at the farthest point, an overlook of the Rio Grande Gorge. A tour of an earthship house may be included. Easy terrain; 3-4 mile loop; 3-4 hours.

**Leave at 8:00 a.m. Leader: Bob Sivinski.**



#### **4.) Discovery Hike to Williams Lake**

Observant? Like the challenge of field botany? Grab your field guide and hand lens and discover the flora on this 2 mile each way moderate sub-Alpine hike (elevation: 10,200 feet to 11,000 feet) through spruce-fir stands, meadows, and rock fields to a gorgeous alpine lake. 4 to 4 1/2 hours. Limited to 12 discoverers.

**Meet at 7:30 a.m. Leader: Jim Tuomey.**

#### **5.) Italianos Canyon**

Field trip to a fir-aspen belt, within the Canadian life zone of the Taiga (northern coniferous forest biome) in the Taos Ski Valley. A moderate hike along a stream beginning at 8,600 feet and ending at 9,500 feet in an aspen grove. A checklist of plants will be provided. We will eat lunch at the aspen grove and return to the lodge by 1:30 p.m.

**Meet 9:00 a.m. Leader: John Ubelaker.**

#### **6.) Fred Baca Park Wetlands**

Tour this five-acre oasis on boardwalks and observation decks in the center of the town of Taos. Easy, short and partially wheelchair accessible. Length of trip 1 to 1-1/2 hours

**Two starting times: (A) 10 a.m. and (B) 2 p.m. Leader: a Rocky Mountain Youth Corps volunteer.**

*Continued on next page*

## FIELD TRIPS CONT'D

### 7.) Fire Ecology and Recovery

Visit the Lama wildfire site 5 years later with a Forest Service biologist. Observe the extraordinary rejuvenation of vegetation; view the dramatic alteration of the watershed resulting from an immediate post burn rain event that caused severe flooding of the steep, fire denuded slopes. Compare photos taken right after the fire. Flat and easy to moderate walking; maximum elevation 8,000 ft. 3-4 hours. Bring lunch.

**Meet at 8:30 a.m. Leader: George Long.**

### 8.) Medicinal Herb Stroll

Join an owner of the Taos Herb Company who has practiced in Taos as a clinical herbalist for 21 years. Find, identify and collect medicinal herbs and discuss their many uses. Easy walking in an area just southeast of Taos. 3 hours. **Leave at 9 a.m. Leader: Robert Hawley.**

### 9.) Geology and Botanical Surprises

Explore the truly majestic Rio Grande Gorge from the Wild Rivers BLM area north of Taos with a geologist and a botanist. Read the rocks which tell the geologic history of the Taos Box and Southern Rockies. Discover botanical surprises and plants of noteworthy botanical interest. Walk from the rim down to the river (800 vertical feet) and return, a 3 miles round trip.

**Meet at 8:30 a.m. Leaders: Tony Benson and Chick Keller.**

*Want to Donate an Item to the Silent Auction?  
Call Sally Wasowski at 505-776-1497.*

**When you sign up for a field trip on the registration form below, please select your first, second and third choices. We will do our very best to get you your first choice, but we ask you to be flexible. The trips will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.**

*Field Trip Committee*

## REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH ATTENDEE

SEND FORM & CHECK TO:

NPSNM ANNUAL MEETING, C/O ANN SMITH, 14 LOS CORDOVAS, RANCHOS DE TAOS 87557

**PLEASE PRINT!**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

I PLAN TO ATTEND EARLY BIRD FIELD TRIP  
"BOTANY & BUTTERFLIES" ON THURSDAY

**Field trips:** Indicate 1st, 2nd & 3rd preferences:

- 1. Wildflowers/Sub-Alpine
- 2. Wildflower Meadow
- 3. Sage Scrub
- 4. Williams Lake
- 5. Italianos Canyon
- 6A. Baca Park Wetlands 10 a.m.
- 6B. Baca Park Wetlands 2 p.m.
- 7. Fire Ecology
- 8. Medicinal Herbs
- 9. Geology/Botanical

MEETING T-SHIRT (OPTIONAL)  
\$18.00 EACH REGISTRATION PRICE  
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Quantity \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Early Registration (before July 1st) \$40.00**

(After July 1st \$50.00)

Make Check out to NPSNM Annual Meeting 2001

**Total Sent \$ \_\_\_\_\_** (Registration and T-Shirt)

## THE GREMLINS ARE GONE!

Jane Mygatt tells us the NPSNM Web Site is running smoothly again. Log on for Society business (budget, by-laws, etc.), native plant articles by Bob Sivinski, Kelly Allred, et al, Chapter News, and botanical links. It's always being updated, so log on regularly.

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## Albuquerque Spring Plant Sale

When? Saturday, April 28, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Where? The Albuquerque Garden Center,  
10120 Lomas NE.

Part of the 21st Annual Garden Fair sponsored by  
the Albuquerque Council of Garden Clubs. Want  
to volunteer for a four hour shift, either Friday or  
Saturday? Call Peggy Wells, 256-1920.

# FRAXINUS CUSPIDATA: The Neglected Ash

by Wynn Anderson

Coming from the rocky canyons of the Chihuahuan Desert Region of northern Mexico and western Texas, crossing southern and western New Mexico and stretching north along the Mogollon Rim into northern Arizona is a curiously neglected member of the ash branch of the olive family. This small tree is commonly known as Flowering Ash or Fragrant Ash, but is more properly identified as *Fraxinus cuspidata*, and seems to be just one of those poor relatives that doesn't get proper respect.

Until it blooms, that is!

Late in spring, it is covered with strongly fragrant, gracefully drooping clusters of creamy white flowers that dance lightly with the slightest breeze. The small 1/2-inch perfect flowers are composed of 4 long, narrow lobes or petals that curl back lightly, clustering in 3 to 4-inch long panicles that dangle from the tips of branches amid new spring growth. From a distance, a fragrant ash in full bloom seems to be covered by a thin sheet of gossamer webbing, shimmering in the sun as if touched by a late spring snow.

Flowering or fragrant ash displays typical ash-like foliage that also tends to droop gracefully like the flowers. The pinnate leaves are usually composed of 5 to 7 leaflets, each 1 to 1-1/2 inches long

*Fraxinus cuspidata*



Drawing by Robert DeWitt Ivey

and strongly attenuated or pointed at the tip, hence the origin of the term "cuspidata." The fertilized flowers set papery seeds known as samaras; hard flattened nutlets partially surrounded by a long, tapered, somewhat flexible "wing" that aids in wind borne dispersal.

Normally, in cultivation fragrant ash is an upright, single-trunked tree with a rounded crown similar to velvet ash. But the similarity to its popular cousin ends there. First, it is smaller, averaging only 15 to 20 feet in height and width. Secondly, it is much more drought tolerant, being native to dry

## Native Plant

### Chat Room Launched

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico has just launched an email Discussion Group (Listserve) called NMPLANTS.

This can become very valuable for instant communication within the large community of New Mexico native plant enthusiasts. Anyone who subscribes can send a message to, or receive messages from, every other subscriber.

If most of our membership subscribes, our communications and effectiveness will be greatly enhanced.

NMPLANTS can be used to: Make announcements of activities, conservation issues.

new book releases, interesting web sites, taxonomic changes, etc.; Ask questions (What's blooming and where? Who sells certain plants? How do I control a certain pest?); Organize activities, and find people with similar interests; and much more!

Obviously, the success of NMPLANTS listserve will depend on getting lots of people to subscribe and then not being shy about using it.

How do you become a subscriber? We've made it real easy. Just open the NPSNM website at <http://npsnm.unm.edu>, then click on the word NMPLANTS-L and follow the instructions.

Got questions, contact Bob Sivinski at [bsivinski@state.nm.us](mailto:bsivinski@state.nm.us).

rocky slopes and canyons, rather than permanent water courses and springs that provide normal habitat for thirsty riparian trees such as velvet ash. Furthermore, fragrant ash is insect pollinated and is not dependent upon the wind to distribute pollen like most ash trees, a small blessing to allergy-prone neighbors.

The plant is quite cold hardy and reasonably drought tolerant, but deep supplemental irrigation once or twice a month is required to insure an attractive appearance, new growth, and good flower production. Fragrant ash is adaptable to most soil types, both igneous and limestone derived, as long as they are at least moderately well draining. It prefers full sun but will take light shade, particularly from the hot late afternoon sun. As it can sometimes develop a rather shrubby appearance in the wild, some occasional moderate pruning in early summer after blooming will help insure development of a more tree-like, single-trunked habit in cultivated settings.

Although useful in a variety of landscapes, from mass plantings with other small sized trees and shrubs to screening where a shrubby character can be induced, *Fraxinus cuspidata* is at its best when used as a flowering accent and shade tree in small yards or narrow spaces. It is especially useful as a patio or courtyard tree, where both its compact, airy shade

and wonderful fragrance can be fully appreciated. Reasonably neat, noninvasive, and tough once established, this attractive ash should also make an excellent choice for commercial settings. New Mexico designer and author Judith Phillips touts this tree for its wildlife enhancing attributes; it provides good cover and nesting nooks, as well as reliable fall seed crops.

I can't explain why this tree is not more widely available commercially. It is produced by some small growers, but is largely neglected by major suppliers. Certainly this tree belongs in cultivation within New Mexico's Chihuahuan Desert country, around Carlsbad, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Deming, and Lordsburg. Until some wholesale producer becomes captivated by it, you can take heart that *Fraxinus cuspidata* germinates readily from seeds moist-chilled for spring planting. Even simply planting fresh seeds will bring sufficient rewards for most landscaping purposes. But be sure to share any excess treasure with friends and neighbors.

*Wynn Anderson is the Botanical Curator for the Centennial Museum at the University of Texas at El Paso where he supervises the Chihuahuan Desert Garden, a mini-botanical gardens displaying native flora of the Chihuahuan Desert in landscape settings. To contact Wynn, email him at [anderson@utep.edu](mailto:anderson@utep.edu) or by regular mail c/o UTEP, El Paso TX 79968.*



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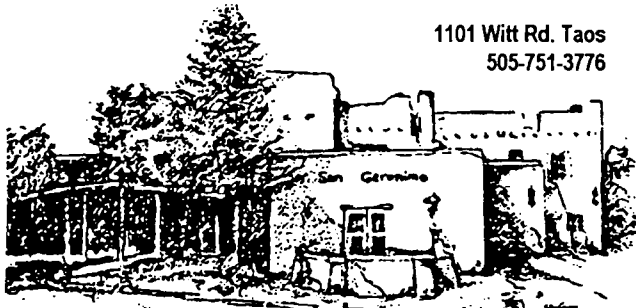
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# CONSERVATION CORNER

*Jim Nellessen, NPSNM Conservation Chair*

An article published in *Bioscience* (July, 2000, Vol. 50, No. 7) discusses the "Economic Associations among Causes of Species Endangerment in the United States." It looks at the reasons why both plant and animal species are threatened or endangered, and attempts to determine how various causes are correlated with each other.

Some of the top categories with a high degree of association are: urbanization, agriculture, interactions with nonnative species, domestic livestock and ranching activities, and outdoor recreation and tourism development. Others are industrial activities, pollution, reservoirs and surface water diversion, modified fire regimes and silvicultural practices, and mining, mineral, gas, and oil activities. A few of the categories in the bottom 10 were logging and road construction and maintenance.

How can we effectively conserve not only our rare plant species, but also a healthy portion of all native plant communities? Federal and state agencies do this in varying degrees through national and state parks, forests, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges. The Nature Conservancy, a private conservation organization, has helped conserve 12 million acres in the U.S. in its 50-year history.

A recent article in *Ecological Restoration* (Fall, 2000, Vol. 18, No. 3) entitled "Land Trusts: A Restoration Frontier?" discusses this booming method of conservation. Land trusts are nonprofit groups that protect land by direct purchase or use various legal approaches such as easements. Land trusts have preserved 4.7 million acres in the U.S., above and beyond The Nature Conservancy. Restoration of native communities is often a big part of these projects.

A proposed program here in New Mexico aimed at conserving forest habitats is the Forest Legacy Program. Its purpose is to help private landowners, state and local governments, and land trusts to protect environmentally important forested lands from fragmentation and conversion to other uses.

I encourage chapters to inform me of local conservation projects you have going.

## *Neiman Cont'd from Front Page*

In 1989, he formed Native American Seed to specialize in the harvest and sale of wildflower seeds and prairie grasses for the Texas/Oklahoma/Louisiana bioregion. In 1995, the company moved to Junction. Each year NAS provides thousands of pounds of wildflower seeds to the Texas Department of Transportation for highway beautification.

Bill is an in-demand speaker and has addressed audiences at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, The Native Plant Society of Texas, and the Society of Ecological Restoration, to name a few venues. His keynote to us is titled: "Looking Back, Looking In, Looking Out: Our Impact on the Next Several Generations."

## Chapter Activities & Events Cont'd

### SAN JUAN (Farmington area)

Ken Heil, Professor of Biology at San Juan College will present two programs on "Invasive Plants." which will be open to NPSNM members and enrolled students only.

**April 4th, 6 to 8 PM.** Henderson Building, Room 9006, San Juan College.

**April 11, 6 to 8 PM.** Henderson Building Sun Room, San Juan College.

**April 28, 9 AM.** Donna Hatcher will host a program and nature walk on "Native Plants and Their Uses." Farmington Nature Center.

**May 5.** Field Trip touring local yards featuring native landscape plants. Time and locations to be announced.

For more information on programs and field trips, contact Nancy Dunning, 334-0196.

**Carlsbad, Santa Fe, and Taos have no events scheduled.**



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# Book Reviews

## The Hidden Forest: The Biography of an Ecosystem

Jon R. Luoma

Owl Books Edition, Henry Holt and Company  
New York 2000, ISBN 0-8050-6448-6  
\$15.00

Jon R. Luoma is a contributing editor to *Audubon Magazine*, a frequent contributor to the Science Times section of the *New York Times*, and the author of two previous books, *A Crowded Ark* and *Troubled Skies, Troubled Waters: The Story of Acid Rain*.

His latest book, *The Hidden Forest*, is composed of published research and interviews with scientists at the Andrews Experimental Forest in Oregon. But don't expect a dry recounting of facts! Forests have always captured people's imagination and have long generated legends and fairy tales. This modern absorbing tale about the Andrews forest will also captivate you. Luoma distills a readable and understandable story from the most fascinating discoveries at this site, and his suspenseful writing will keep you turning the pages. He also has the great gift of making complex concepts accessible.

Botanists, entomologists, wildlife biologists, soil biologists and other researchers have studied this wild and ancient sixteen thousand acre site, and made discoveries that will not only astonish the reader, but already have influenced numerous forest management reforms. Luoma says that he set out "to write a book that would help readers... see the forest for the trees." Simply put, it's the story of how life supports large trees and how large trees support life.

Chapter 1 introduces the Andrews Experimental Forest. Since the 1970s, researchers have examined and recorded the functions of a single forest type; to be more specific they have studied a primal, mature forest. They have grown closer to understanding the multifaceted interactions of this intertwined world. When did scientists begin to study nature's links? Ecology, as the task is called, was adopted as a term in the late 1900s. However, interest in the web of nature goes back to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Beginning with Linnaeus, Luoma discusses the contributions and advances in ecology by Gilbert White, Henry David Thoreau, Charles Darwin, Ernst Haeckel and Eugenius Warming. Luoma's own definition of ecology is simple and poetic: "It is the science of who eats whom, and who lives where, of how energy and nu-



Jon R. Luoma

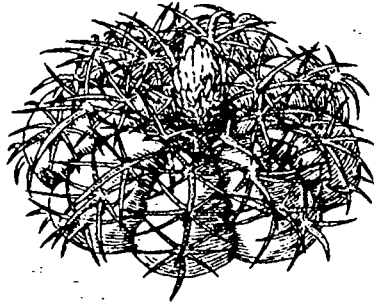
trients course through the tissue of the living world, the science of the study of the production of living tissue and its consumption and decay. It is the great integrative biological science of not just molecules, not just cells, not just whole organisms, but of the complex dance of nature across space and time."

In the remaining chapters, we look at the forest from the top down and from the outside in. For example, forest canopy research answers one intriguing question: where does the much-needed nitrogen in this forest come from? Next, Luoma chronicles the importance of fallen logs on the forest floor as well as in streams. Other research extends below the forest soil, where countless, tiny species of soil animals, such as arthropods, and fungi can influence the health of the forest. Still more angles are covered when the roles of forest fires, the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens, and even floods are examined. Finally, Luoma addresses conservation issues.

The facts and details that Luoma has collected all point to one thing: it takes curiosity, perseverance, and time to begin to understand the workings of an ecosystem. Moreover, the natural world consists of countless delicately balanced ecosystems that we need to understand better. Large-scale, long-term interdisciplinary research has proven to be a good tool. Reading about the Andrews Forest will fascinate and delight you; it will also make you wish you knew this much about your own neck of the woods.

*Lisa Mandelkern*

## CACTUS WORKSHOPS



There are 14 genera and about 104 different types of cacti in New Mexico. If you'd like to be able to distinguish between *Coryphantha* and *Mammillaria*, or the different species of *Echinocereus*, then sign up for one of NPSNM's two 2-day cactus identification workshops, Thursday and Friday, April 26th-27th, and again on Saturday and Sunday, April 28th-29th. Held in Alamogordo and led by Ken Heil, Professor at San Juan College, each workshop will have equal measures of classroom instruction and field trips to Dog Canyon and White Sands. For an application form, e-mail Joe Duft at [jduft@totacc.com](mailto:jduft@totacc.com) or call 505-443-6026.

## PLANT DRAWING WORKSHOP

NPSNM is sponsoring a 2-day plant drawing workshop, Friday and Saturday, July 27th-28th, at UNM in Albuquerque. Dorothy Hoard (author/illustrator: *A Guide to Flowers of the Southwestern Forests and Woodlands*) will be instructing, with an assist from Wynn Anderson, curator of the Chihuahuan Desert Garden at the University of Texas-El Paso. The first day: classroom discussion on techniques and materials. The second day: in the field observing, collecting and sketching.



If you're a beginner, this workshop will give you basic approaches to drawing plants. If you're experienced, this workshop should sharpen your skills. For an application brochure, contact Lolly Jones at 505-771-8020 or email her at [Trigo05@msn.com](mailto:Trigo05@msn.com). Space is limited to 25 people, so apply ASAP.

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