Native Plant Society of New Mexico

NEWSLETTER

July-September 2001 Volume XXVI Number 3

Sacramento Mountains Chapter Wins Grant for Native Garden

Educational Garden to Benefit Nob Hill Early Childhood Center

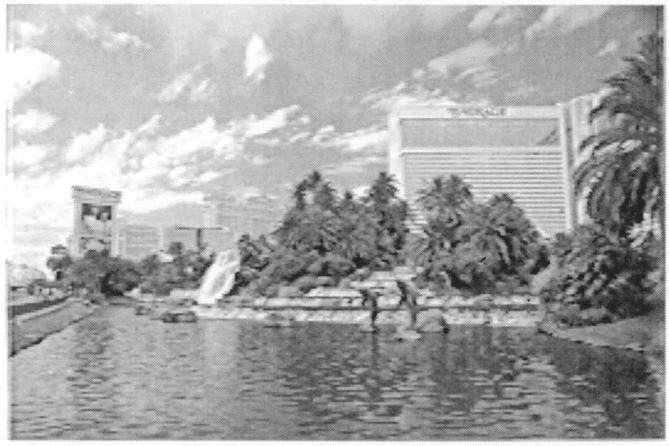
Submitted by Betsy Hall

Ruidoso-area preschool and kindergarten children will get a chance to learn about planting and growing native plants, thanks to a grant from the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The $900 grant for educational landscaping was approved at the February NPSNM Board Meeting, and will be matched by an equal amount from the Ruidodo Municipal School District. The project is scheduled to begin in late May.

Bob Hall, president of the Sacramento Mountains Chapter, said chapter members are very excited about designing and planting the garden. "The Nob Hill Educational Landscape project is our chapter's initial community development project," said Hall. "The garden is a great way to promote the use of native plantings and show how native plants help conserve water. The children will have a wonderful green space and we hope we'll attract some new members, too." ***Cont'd page 14***

INSIDE

WATER HUSTLERS



"Once there was a time when the rain fell and trickled to the streams, and streams carried the water to the rivers, and the rivers flowed unbroken to the sea. This was how Nature, God, The Great Spirit, Fate — take your pick — irrigated the landmass of the planet, kept it green and good for all living things. The giver of water, of course, was not impartial to all regions of the earth. Some areas received great quantities of water, other received little, a few received none at all. Where rainfall was sparse, species adjusted accordingly, or expired. Where the rainfall was generous, life flourished in and beside streams and rivers and lakes and estuaries. Only one standing-up species defied the natural order of things and ventured where he did not belong. Man moved to the desert. And lacking the camel's hump but with profound ingenuity, he devised a manner of moving water from where it was to where it had never been before. Meanwhile, those who stayed behind in the lush rain-country were busy turning their streams and rivers into sewers, so that before long the water was unfit to drink and people had to look elsewhere for new supplies. The search resulted in a manner of moving more water from where it was to where the people were. That is how water hustling came to be the second oldest profession in the world."

The Water Hustlers ***by Boyle, Graves, & Watkins, 1971***

TREES

Traditions & Myths

By Dr. Kim D. Coder

From the earliest human writings and myths, trees have represented the power and mystery of nature. Large, ancient trees seemed immortal, demanding respect and reverence. They could bear huge crops of seed and grow forests full of their own offspring. When struck by lightening or set aflame, trees, even in death, were creatures of worship, awe, and fear — the homes of gods.

Every part of the globe has a myth about this "godliness." From the oak in central Europe, ash in Scandinavia, and Shorea in India, trees were revered. Many early peoples thought that the spirits of their ancestors lived in trees. They cultivated and protected holy trees and would beg forgiveness from a tree if it was cut. Some believed that the souls of unborn babies lived in trees until birth. In Korea, the spirits of women who had died in childbirth were thought to live in trees.

Creation Myths

Other groups of people considered trees to be closely bound with their own creation. Ancient Greeks believed that the first man was made from an ash tree. In Siberia, man and woman were thought to have been created from a larch and a fir. Scandinavian myths state that gods breathed life into two tree trunks and made the first human couple. Other Northern Europeans believed man was first carved from an alder. In Indonesia, vertical slices cut into a fig tree by two gods created man, while horizontal slices created woman. And in New Guinea, man was considered to be a tree that moved!

Some trees were well-known for their special attributes. In many areas, the birch was seen as representing health, wisdom, and safety, and so was used to make baby cradles and cribs, as well as symbols of public office. Cedars are held as sacred in Nepal, were called the trees of paradise in the Mideast, and were symbols of faithful lovers in China. Junipers were planted as protection from thieves and witches, while mountain ash twigs were tied into knots to prevent witchcraft. Ash was also considered a tree of rebirth and planted as protection against evil creatures. Pine, acacia, white cedar, catalpa, and chestnut trees were planted in specific spots for specific gods around Chinese temples, and hazel was considered to be protection against lightning.

Some of our common trees were highly revered. Willows, for example, were the trees of sorrow, and in colder climates were substituted for palms during Palm Sunday observances. Oaks were the symbols of strength and power, and many cults, such as the Druids, grew up around this tree. And in China, pines became the symbol of friendship in adversity since they remain green all year.

Life and Death

Even ways of life and death have been associated with particular trees. Tree planting, for example, was considered an investment in life. In Germany, it was customary to plant a tree at a wedding. And as each child arrived, a tree was planted: an apple tree for every boy and a pear tree for every girl. The longevity and fruitfulness of the trees were thought to give strength to the marriage and the children. Marco Polo said that the Khan had many trees planted because "he who plants a tree will live a long life."

Tree symbols could also be seen in warfare. In China, the victors would rather cut down holy forests than tear down temples as a supreme gesture of conquest. Many weapons were made of wood from special trees in the hope that the strength of the tree would reside in the warriors.

Trees remain strong symbols today. Companies and organizations use trees as part of their corporate logos and as names for real-estate developments. Trees are planted, specific woods used, and tree symbols developed, not because of botanical contexts, but rather for their positive, long-lived, and strong emotional imagery.

Our traditions of living with trees continue today. From our backyards, to the names of streets and shopping centers — trees and tree symbols surround us.

What will become the tree myths and traditions for our age?

Dr. Kim D. Coder is a forest specialist with the University of Georgia. **This article originally appeared in *Southwest Trees & Turf* in January, 2000 and appears here with the permission of the author.**

POINT...COUNTERPOINT

"Show your yard this is one turf war you plan to win."

Lawnmower Ad for
Home Depot

"Lawnmowers alone account for 25,000 serious injuries and seventy-five deaths yearly; one in five victims is a child."

Leslie Sauer
The Once and Future Forest

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
andrzej@laplaza.org

Deadline for next issue is Sept. 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

The Meaning of Membership

There is more to being a member of NPSNM than the study and enjoyment of native flora. There is the obligation to actively safeguard the ecological communities and habitats that host native flora. Unfortunately, powerful money-eyed forces are diligently dismantling environmental safeguards that protect these communities and habitats, while at the same time attempting to muzzle or discredit organizations supporting these safeguards.

These forces have, by their machinations, made membership in an organization such as NPSNM a *de facto* political act. Therefore, editorials voicing concern and fear about the lifting of restrictions on CO_2 emissions and on arsenic in drinking water, limiting public access to information about the potential consequences of chemical plant accidents, the resignation of the Forest Service Chief, and the increasing pressures to pillage and plunder wildlife preserves are not outbursts of political bias, but cries of alarm and warning.

This is not a time for the NPSNM members to be reticent or timid; it is a time to speak up, speak out, and be political. All that the NPSNM and native plant societies throughout America stand for is under attack. Silence will allow the circumvention or dilution of every environmental and wildlife protection ever enacted. Silence will allow the deliberate destruction of the environment, and then there will be no need for native plant societies.

Edward Abbey (author and self-proclaimed "agrarian anarchist") wrote: "It is not enough to understand the natural world; the point is to defend and preserve it."

The editor of the NPSNM *Newsletter* is doing just that! And we as NPSNM members should do the same!

James Tuomey, Taos

Words from the Past

As a proud "tree-hugger," I assert that native plant issues are inseparable from all "environmental social justice issues," and I'm gratified to see the connection addressed in (the) newsletter.

I'm just now reading an old book, *Grand Canyon*, by Joseph Wood Krutch. In it, he cites a section of a speech Theodore Roosevelt delivered at the Canyon. I plan to send a copy of this to the new President and his Secretary of the Interior. Too many years have gone by for this to still need to be said!

Patty Schille, Aztec

(Ed: The portion of the speech Patty referred to is on the back page.)

TOTEM ANYONE?

In the Winter issue of *Wildflower* Magazine, Editor Jim Hodgins suggested that "The North American native plant movement needs totems."

He explained that "totem" is derived from the Ojibwa *ototeman*, meaning "his relation." Among North American aboriginals a totem is a hereditary mark, emblem, symbol or badge of a tribe or clan consisting of a figure or representation of some animal, plant, or other natural object important to that group.

Jim then pointed out that various native plant societies have already chosen their plant totems and have named their newsletters accordingly: ***Sego Lily*** (Utah NPS), ***Palmetto*** (Florida NPS), ***Gaillardia*** (Oklahoma NPS), ***Aquilegia*** (Colorado NPS), and in Canada, ***Garry Oak*** (Vancouver) and ***Bluestem*** (Ontario).

So, how about it, New Mexico? Would you like to rename the newsletter after our own totem? And what would that totem be? Yucca? Salvia? Penstemon? Common name or Scientific? Our totem ought to be as ubiquitous as possible in our large and varied state. If you have thoughts on this, pro or con, let's hear from you.

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EDITORIAL

Several years ago, *Wildflower* Magazine reviewed one of Sally's and my books, and referred to us as "botanical missionaries, preaching the good news about native plants." We liked that label, and now use it as our web site address: botanicalmissionaries.com.

But we also felt a bit self-conscious, because we know so many others who could also justly share that appellation. In our travels, we met and became friends with so many other "botanical missionaries" that a complete list would easily fill a big part of this newsletter. To name just a few: ***Lorrie Otto***, in Wisconsin, the matriarch of the natural landscaping movement in the Midwest; ***Benny J. Simpson, Lynn Lowrey,*** and ***Carroll Abbott***, the "big three" behind the native plant movement in Texas; landscape architect, ***Darrel Morrison***, a powerful voice for environmental landscaping in the South; ***Ron Gass***, owner of Mountain States Wholesale Nursery in Glendale, Arizona, and credited with generating interest in natives throughout the Southwest; ***Janet Marinelli***, editor and author at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden; and ***Don Walker***, founder of the Conway School of Landscape Design in Massachusetts, and dedicated to inspiring a new generation of landscape architects who are just as in touch with nature as they are with the fundamentals of hardscaping.

These are among the giants of the native plant movement and, because of their work, we've seen a great rise in interest in natives during the past twenty years. We've also seen an impressive increase in the number of native plant nurseries all across the country, and an ever-growing list of books and articles dealing with natives. And yet...

And yet, many of us wonder why we haven't progressed farther and faster. We wonder why, if our message is so sensible – and it is – and so environmentally on target – and it is – then why are native landscapes still so rare in our neighborhoods? Why do so few members of native plant societies have native/naturalistic landscapes around their own homes? *Why don't we do a better job of practicing what we preach?*

Have you ever brought a friend to your chapter meeting? Have you ever organized or taken part in a protest against unfair weed laws in your community? Or talked to your neighbors about their excessive use of toxic chemicals? Have you ever considered planting a native landscape in your *front* yard?

If we truly believe in what our Society stands for, and want to see real growth in the native plant movement, then maybe we need a bit more passion. Maybe we should all become botanical missionaries. And wear the label proudly.

ARW

Chapter Activities & Events

ALBUQUERQUE

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

July. No Evening Meetings

July 21-22. Field trip (overnight optional) to wetlands in the Canjilon Creek area of northern New Mexico. Leader: Jim McGrath, field botanist. Vegetation of permanent and ephemeral ponds, springs, seeps, and streams. Meet at the Smith's parking lot, Menaul & Carlisle, at 8 a.m.

July 26. Program. *"Beverage, Food and Medicinal Uses of the Composites (Asteraceae)."* Troy Maddux, current Data Base Administrator for the Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) Network Office in Albuquerque and former LTER botanist at Sevilleta.

July 28. Field trip. Follow-up to July 26th program, and led by Troy Maddux.

August 25. Native Plant Sale and Educational Fair. Albuquerque Garden Center from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

September 6. Program. *"Common Grasses of Bernalillo County"* by David Bleakly, botanical consultant for Bleakly Botanical & Biological, LLC.

September 8. Field trip. Follow-up to September 6th program. Field identification of the common grasses of Bernalillo County. Leader: David Bleakly.

EL PASO (Texas)

Monthly (except December) meetings with programs held at Centennial Museum, UTEP campus, at 7 p.m.

July 12. Program. *"Chihuahuan Winter Annuals: Big Bend in Bloom."* Wynn Anderson, Botanical Curator, Chihuahuan Desert Gardens, will narrate his and members slides from the spectacular 30-year display seen this spring.

July 21. Field experience to La Luz Canyon, Sacramento Mountains above Alamogordo. Led by Jack Bristol and Lillian Mayberry. 915-532-3132 for info & reservations.

August 10. Program. *"Growing Native: The Care of Native Plant Gardens,"* John White, Dona Ana County Horticultural Extension Agent, NMSU.

August 16-19. Field experience to the NPSNM Annual Meeting in Taos NM. Leader: Sarah Wood, EPNPS President. Contact Sarah or Wynn Anderson regarding travel arrangements.

September 14. Program TBA.

September 15-16. Field experience and overnight campout to South Fork of Cave Creek and Rustlers Park., Chiricahua Mts, AZ, led by Wynn Anderson. 915-533-6072 for info and reservations.

GILA (Silver City)

The following field trips meet at 8 a.m. at the WNMU Fine Arts south parking lot:

June 30, July 7 & July 14. Workshop. The Gila Chapter and Western New Mexico University are sponsoring a three-day workshop titled *"Learning the Local Flora."* Emphasis is on woody and herbaceous plants of southwestern New Mexico. Instructors: Jack Carter, Janet Gilchrist, Lynn Moseley, and Donna Stevens. Classroom instruction and field trips to local areas will focus on becoming familiar with plant identification terms, use of an herbarium, and using materials necessary for correct identification.

July 22. Field trip to Gila River Nature Conservancy area. Leader: Carol Reynolds.

August 19. Field trip to Continental Divide trail from Arrastra, Pinos Altos area, Gila National Forest. Leader: Gerry Niva. For details, call Gerry at 505-388-8146.

September 21. Program. Sharman Apt Russell reading from her new book, *Anatomy of a Rose.* 7 p.m. Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus.

LAS CRUCES

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

July 11, 7 p.m. *"White Sands Pupfish: Distribution, Ecology and Management."* Among other things, Debby Nethers will prepare us for some of the stops we will make on the upcoming field trip to WSMR.

July 14. Field trip to White Sands Missile Range, northward to the Oscura Mts. Leader: Dave Anderson. Dave, land manager at WSMR, will inform and enlighten us on flora, fauna, history and geology of the area. Mostly driving with stops along the way. Participants must sign up in advance at the June meeting. Meet at K-mart Parking Lot on Hwy 70, 7 a.m.

August 11. Field trip to Tularosa Canyon. Leader: Lisa Mandelkern. Tall pines and colorful mountain meadows are in store for us. We will brush up on the flora of the Southwest Uplands. Mostly driving, with stops along the way. Meet at K-mart Parking Lot on Hwy. 70, 8 a.m.

September 15. Field trip to the Dona Ana Peak area. Leaders: John Freyermuth and Carolyn Gressitt. Trip can be extended to the summit of Dona Ana Peak, depending on the temperature and participants' interest. The peak offers breathtaking vistas. We will see diverse desert flora; and we will pay special attention to the grasses along the way. Moderate hiking uphill. Meet at K-mart Parking Lot on Hwy. 70, 8 a.m.

OTERO

July 28. Field trip. White Oaks Ghost Ranch (NE of Carrizozo) Meet at Kmart at 8 a.m. or Carrizozo gas station 9 a.m. Confirm with Jean Dodd 434-4031.

August 4. Field trip. 4 mile hike down Benson Canyon. Elevation difference of 1,600 ft starting at 9,500 ft. Meet at Cloudcroft Ranger Station at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch & water. Call John Stockert 585-2546.
August 11. Field trip. "Plant succession after major fires." Leader: Linda Barker. Meet at Cloudcroft Ranger Station 8 a.m. Bring lunch & water.
August 24-26. Field trip. Magdalena Mountains. Elevation range 3,000 ft to 10,000 ft. Camp at Water Canyon or stay in local motel. Contact Jean Dodd 434-4031.
September 15. Field trip. White Sands National Monument. Leader: John Mangimeli, Chief Park Naturalist. Call Jean Dodd 434-4031 for details.

SACRAMENTO MTS (Ruidoso)

July 21. Field trip. Hike the Osha Trail in Cloudcroft. Meet at Zenith Park (on the left as you enter Cloudcroft) at 10 a.m. Bring a picnic lunch.
August 25. Field trip. Tour of Mescalero Apache Reservation to view native plants and forest management. Led by Bill Hornsby. Bring picnic lunch. Time and meeting site TBA.
September 15. Field trip, preceded by seed gathering slide show. Leader: Bill Hornsby. Meet at Nob Hill Early Childhood Center, 103 Sutton Dr. Bring small bags for seed collecting. Bring picnic lunch. Time TBA.
Note: Work Days for Nob Hill landscaping project TBA as soon as curb construction is completed.

SANTA FE

July 14. Field trip. Villaneuva State Park. Leader: Bob Sivinski. Sarah Wood, another botanist, will bring a plant press. Meet at Visitors Center at 9 a.m. Call Truel West for details & carpool info, 988-9621.
August 4. Field trip. Cerrillos Hill Historic Park open space. Meet at What Not Shop in Cerrillos at 8:30 a.m. Call Mark Kaltenback for detail, 920-4506.
September 19. Program TBA. St. John's College.

TAOS

2nd Wednesdays at San Geronimo Lodge, 7 p.m.
July 11. *"Fire, Ecology & Native Species."* Justin Dean, fire ecologist with BLM in Taos.
August 16-19. Annual Meeting and the 25th Anniversary of NPSNM. Programs and Field Trips, Silent Auction and Banquet, Fun and Fellowship. Headquarters is the Kachina Lodge.
September 12. *"Harvesting Seed and Growing Native Plants."* Susan Westbrook, Farm Mgr. at Plants of the Southwest, Santa Fe.

BASE CAMP BOTANY

New Mexico has many remote areas that have been visited by few, if any, botanists. We need the help of hale and hardy volunteers to botanically explore these little-known places. NPSNM and the New Mexico Hiking Society are forming a Base Camp Botany Program to will make plant inventories and scientific collections in areas that have not been adequately sampled. Our first Base Camp Botany outing will focus on the southern peaks of the San Mateo Mountains in the Apache Kid Wilderness. Base camp will be made at Springtime Campground on **Friday evening, August 3rd.** The hikes are from dawn to dusk Saturday. One group will go to San Mateo Peak and the other to Vick's Peak. This will be a strenuous hike up an elevation of 3,000 feet. Come help us assess the flora of these rugged mountain tops in a remote area few people ever see.

For additional information, contact Bob Sivinski, 505-438-9690 or at bsivinski@state.nm.us.

ATTENTION ALL YOU ASPIRING MONETS AND O'KEEFFES

Learn to draw native plants. NPSNM is holding a two-day plant drawing workshop, Friday and Saturday, July 27th and 28th, at UNM in Albuquerque. Dorothy Hoard (author/illustrator: *A Guide to Flowers of the Southwestern Forests and Woodlands*) is the instructor. Wynn Anderson, another accomplished plant illustrator, will be lending a hand.

Day One will be a classroom discussion of techniques and materials. Day Two will be spent in the field, collecting and sketching.

If you're a beginner, this workshop will give you the invaluable basics of drawing plants. If you're experienced, the workshop will sharpen your skills. For an application brochure, contact Lolly Jones at 505-771-8020 or email her at trigo05@msn.com.

$40 for members, $50 for nonmembers

For additional information check
http://npsnm.unm.edu/welcome/whats_new.htm#section4

Space is limited to 25, so apply ASAP!

THE TRAIL OF E. O. WOOTON

by Kelly Allred

Excerpted with permission of the author from New Mexico Resources, *NMSU, Spring 1993*

In the hot afternoon sun of July 8, 1904, at 4:15 p.m., a professor of Biology at Las Cruces' New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanical Arts settled himself on the wooden seat of his wagon, clucked to the horses, and embarked on a 55-day botanical expedition through New Mexico Territory.

He carried with him all the paraphernalia necessary for plant collecting, camping, cooking, and living in the wilds for an extended period of time: pots, pans, and utensils rattling in the grub box; an overabundance of plant presses, blotters, and tin vascula for collecting specimens and boxes for shipping them home; provisions for the crew, hay and grain for the horses; and the indispensable roll of baling wire for repairs. The professor's name was Elmer Ottis Wooton, known to all as "E. O."

It had been 16 years since Wooton joined the fledgling college in Las Cruces, arriving the year of its inception in 1888. During this time he had established himself as the premier, if not the only, resident botanist in the Territory of New Mexico, becoming well known not only to the citizenry of ranchers and farmers, but also to the Eastern establishment of plant scientists.

Through his efforts, the plant collection at the college grew from nothing to more than 35,000 specimens, and plants from New Mexico would find their way into museums throughout the world, many with the species epithet "Wootonii" in honor of their collector. He would, himself, name 231 plant species new to science. Eleven years later he would publish the first *Flora of New Mexico*, the only manual of New Mexico botany for the next 65 years.

Discovery

I became interested in E. O. Wooton about 1983 as I searched for information on the botanical history of New Mexico. Going through cartons of Wooton memorabilia in the New Mexico State University Archives, I came across a worn, stiff-backed, 4-by-8-inch notebook. The first page carried the inscription in Wooton's hand, "Notes of the 1904 Trip." The pages following were penciled with his

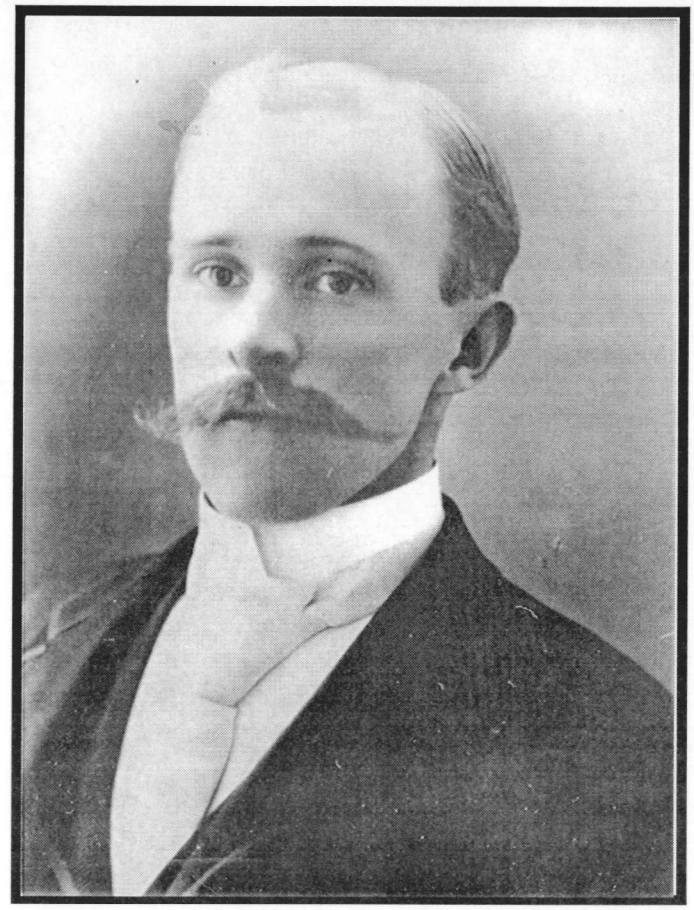


Photo courtesy of NMSU Archives

Wooton in 1896

notes on the itinerary, vegetation, geology, erosion, grazing, farming and ranching practices, and acquaintances met en route as he traveled a 1,200-mile loop northward through western New Mexico and returned southward through the central portions of the Territory. Here was an extraordinary glimpse into the life of a working botanist at the turn of the century.

Following in Wooton's Footsteps

Eighty-seven years later, in the summer of 1991, I retraced Wooten's journey, following as closely as possible his exact route. Although he recorded no hard scientific data of the sort we use today, Wooton did make numerous observations on the use and condition of the rangelands. He rambled across open range 30 years before it came under the domination of the Taylor Grazing Act. His horse-drawn wagon passed through immense ponderosa pine lands before any had been set aside as National Forests. I wondered what changes the intervening years had wrought. Had the land and vegetation changed? Were erosion, grazing, and lumbering still taking their toll? What had happened to the settlements and people? Not only this, I wanted to experience, through Wooton's sometimes hurried and sketchy notes, life in New Mex-

ico in 1904, four years before the Model T, eight years before statehood, 23 years before Lucky Lindy traversed the Atlantic, and 77 years before the tentacles of the Very Large Array (radio telescopes) spread across the Plains of San Augustin.

Our journey, Wooton's and mine, took us through New Mexico and Colorado, and diverse plant communities: desert, scrubland, shale badlands, ponderosa forest, sagebrush plains, cottonwood bosque, and juniper woodland. We saw most of the same towns and villages, were sometimes rained on in the same places, nearly became stuck along the same roads, and collected some of the very same plants.

But the differences between our two expeditions were sometimes striking. Wooton required 55 days to complete his adventure, jolting along over dirt roads by horse and wagon and changing teams at least three times. When I undertook the trip, I went from start to finish in only four days, skimming across smooth pavement in an air-conditioned modern automobile, not even changing the oil once.

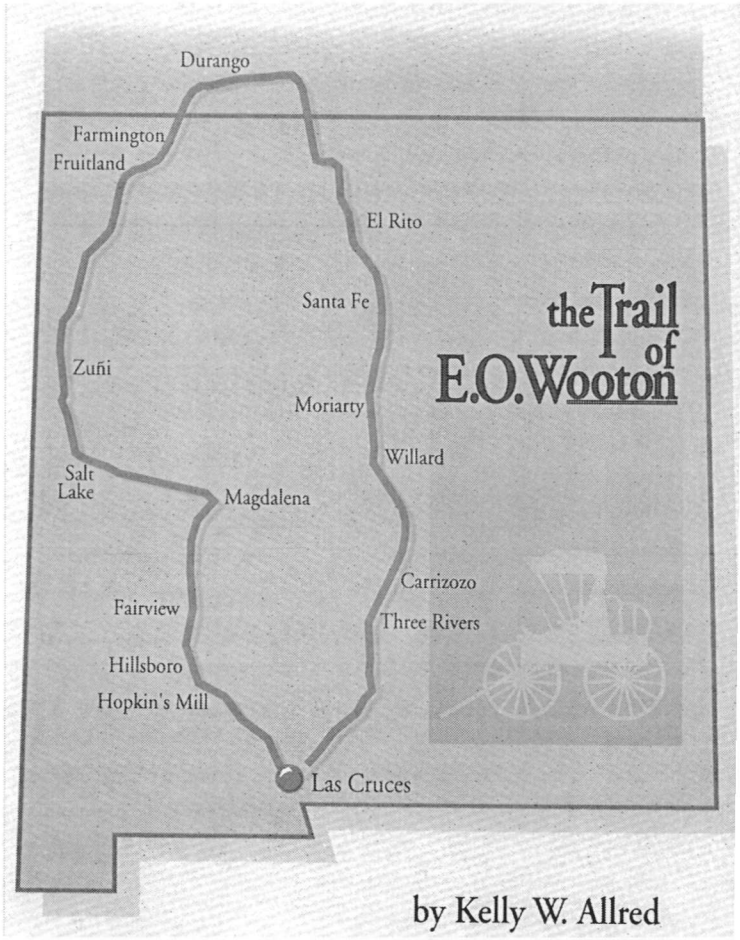
In 1904, New Mexico comprised only 20 counties, with one, Valencia County, spilling across three-quarters the width of the Territory. Today, the State is divided into 33 counties, and Valencia County has shrunk to one of the smallest. Many of the towns Wooton passed through were centers of industry, mining, or transportation, often with post office and government buildings, a grocery or two, two or three (or more) saloons, and pine-board sidewalks. Now, only deserted buildings and weathered clapboards stand along forsaken roads and railways — Tonuco, Kennedy, Hopkins Mill, Hermosa, Progresso, Clark's — their forgotten names mute testimony to the capricious winds of economy and history.

Comparisons

As I traveled these same areas, I was careful to compare current conditions with those recorded by Wooton. Almost without exception, it appeared to me that the rangelands were in better shape. Sites described by Wooton as "bare," "skinned clean," "overstocked," or "denuded of grass," all seemed to have improved, with noticeable grass cover. Most still were not what a stockman would call in excellent condition, and contained plants indicating past abuse or disturbance, such as snakeweed or rabbitbrush. But plants were now holding the soil and grasses were prominent.

Most of the improvements in range condition in New Mexico came along after Wooton's 1904 journey, and even after he ceased roaming the wilds and resided in faraway Washington, D.C. But his ideas on the open range and its deliverance from mismanagement, reinforced by his trek at the turn of the century, fueled the reforms and rehabilitation that were to come.

In 1911 Wooton left New Mexico for the sophistication and refinement of Washington, D.C., taking a position with the Office of Farm Management. He returned periodically to the Land of Enchantment, visiting friends and conducting business for the Department of Agriculture, and even applied for the presidency of the college in 1917. Wooton retired from the USDA in 1935 and died at the age of eighty in Arlington, Virginia.



Kelly Allred is a professor of animal and range sciences at NMSU's College of Agriculture and Home Economics. As a taxonomist, he identifies and categorizes the flora of the region, clearly still following in the footsteps of E. Wooton. Allred is the author of **Grasses of New Mexico.**

CONSERVATION CORNER

Jim Nellessen

SAVE THE PLAINS-MESA SAND SCRUB

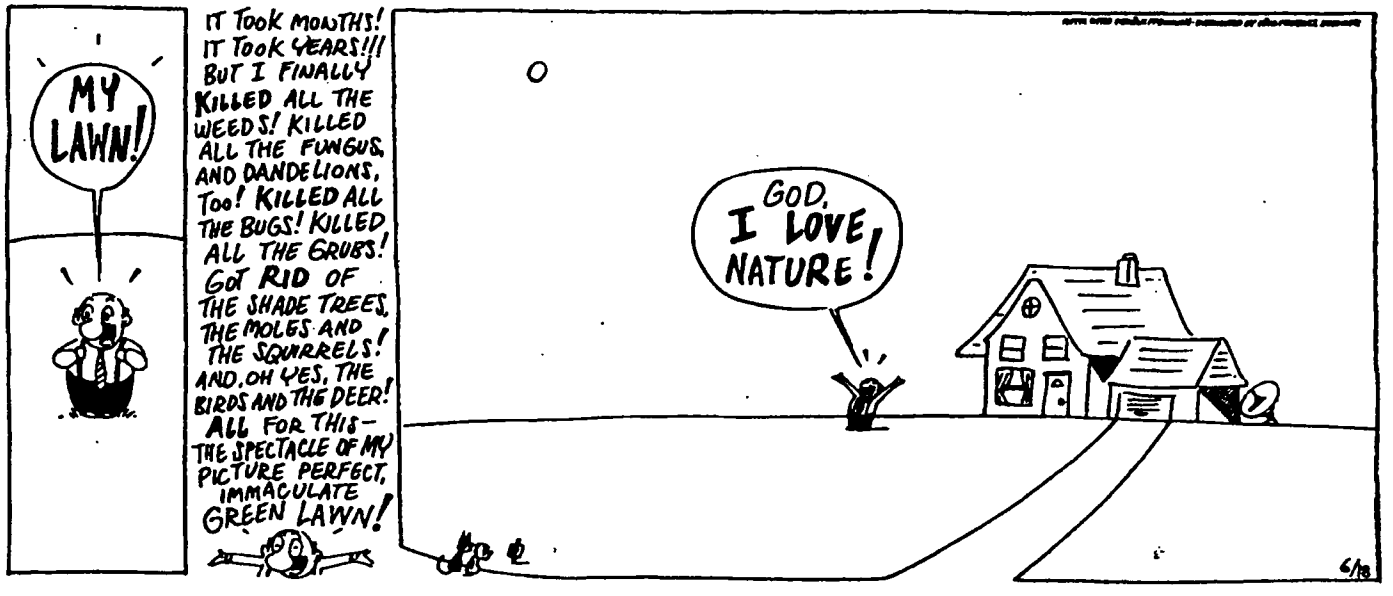
As a plant ecologist, in addition to being concerned about individual species, I often think in terms of entire plant communities or associations. In my work I write a lot of reports for environmental documents, and lately I've been writing comments such as, "This is in an area classified as Plains-Mesa Sand Scrub that is rapidly becoming developed and urbanized," referring mostly to the Albuquerque metro area.

I got to thinking, how much Plains-Mesa Sand Scrub do we have in New Mexico? So I went to W. A. Dick-Pedddie's *New Mexico Vegetation: Past, Present and Future* (1993). His map shows 4,168,722 acres of this habitat throughout the state. This includes areas bounding the Rio Grande from Albuquerque down to Las Cruces, including parts of the Jornada del Muerto. It also includes shin oak dune areas in the southeast corner. Although many species of Plains-Mesa Sand Scrub are common and widespread, the particular assemblage of species that occurs on these naturally deep sand areas is not as widespread. Even though these geographically dispersed areas are all classified as Plains-Mesa Sand Scrub, there are some apparent differences in species mix from the north Rio Grande to the south, and even again to the southeastern corner. *Quecus havardii* (shin oak) is an obvious difference for the southeast, and *Yucca elata* replaces *Yucca glauca* in the southern part of the state.

Hence, the species, *Artemisia filifolia, Psorothamnus scoparius, Atriplex canescens,* and *Yucca glauca,* although common throughout much of the state, tend to form a unique dominant species assemblage (along with other species) in the Albuquerque area. I estimated that the Albuquerque metro area (Santa Ana Pueblo down to US 60) contains about 18 percent of all this habitat in the state. Areas south of US 60 down to White Sands comprise 28 percent of this habitat, and the remaining 54 percent occurs in the southeast.

Looking at maps of Albuquerque area development, I would say that 50 percent of this habitat is already gone or soon will be, leaving Albuquerque with only 9 percent of its historical habitat.

So, I would recommend to the communities of Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Santa Ana Pueblo, Isleta Pueblo, Los Lunas, Belen, and adjacent jurisdictions (e.g. Sandoval, Bernalillo, and Valencia Counties), to start preserving Plains-Mesa Sand Scrub open space before this part of the state has none left. In my mind, the species assemblage in this part of the state is not the same as down south or to the southeast. Pass the word on to all city planners and open-space committees in these areas.



"Environmentalists make terrible neighbors, but great ancestors."

David Brower

A bird never doubts its place at the center of the universe.

Barbara Kingsolver
Prodigal Summer

MEXICAN GOLDPOPPY

Eschscholtzia mexicana

By Wynn Anderson

Sow Now for Spectacular March Blooming

Every few years, a spectacular flowering in March catches the attention of the local news media here in El Paso, and daily visitors to the Wilderness Park Museum in the northeast part of our city increase tenfold. The question which then arises is, "Are the poppies native or the result of aerial seeding by civic minded individuals or organizations?"

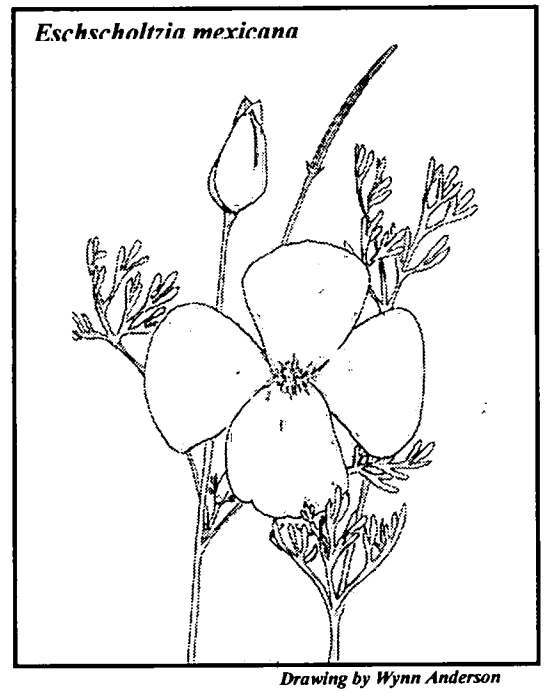
The answer is, both!

The Mexican Goldpoppy is a native from the Big Bend region and Franklin Mountains of Texas, the Organ, Florida, and Peloncillo Mountains in southern New Mexico, and into southern Arizona. Yes, that native population has been augmented on occasion by scattering seeds—most likely of the closely related California Goldpoppy, *E. californica* — from airplanes. This has no doubt resulted in some hybridization but, for the most part, the *Californica* seeds are less drought tolerant and therefore less successful.

Both are members of the *Papaveraceae* family, and some botanists have merged the two into one species. *E. mexicana* is, however, reliably a winter annual and usually smaller in size than the sometimes short-lived perennial, *E. californica.*

Normally displaying golden shades of orange to yellow, some flowers may be bicolored, with deep orange throats and paler petals, although pink or white petals are not unknown. The solitary, four-petaled flowers are held erect on long stems above a blue-green mass of smooth, glaucous, dissected leaves. The foliage rises 8" to 10" from a thick, fleshy, reddish-orange taproot, and the plant produces a noticeable thin, yellow sap. Long, thin pods follow, with numerous round seeds that are explosively expelled as much as 15 feet or more when a ripe pod suddenly splits open.

As most serious native-plant observers know, there can be small localized appearances of *E. mexicana* almost every year, but it takes good summer rains to widely germinate the tiny seeds and regular winter moisture to sustain the tender plants and bring them to full glory in early spring.



Drawing by Wynn Anderson

This past year, due to a lack of rain in January, the display on the slopes of the Franklin Mountains was a diminished, albeit delightful one. The last truly outstanding local show was in 1995.

Other colorful winter annuals found among these poppies this past year include *Nama hispidum, Phacelia coerulea, Lupinus concinnus, Oenothera primiveris, Gilia flavocinta, Ipomopsis pulila, Eriogonum abertianum,* and *Calycoseris wrightii.*

In Your Garden

Sow poppy seed in late summer or early fall in coarse gravelly or sandy soil. If rains are insufficient, irrigate periodically to germinate and develop seedlings into over-wintering rosettes of leaves. Provide twice monthly irrigation in December, January and February for March blooming. Pull and compost plants in May after seeds have dispersed.

Seeds may be ordered from Plants of the Southwest, Albuquerque, 1-800-788-SEED; Native Seed Search, Tucson, Arizona, 520-622-5561, and Wild Seed Inc., Tempe Arizona, 602-345-0669.

Wynn Anderson is the Botanical Curator of the Centennial Museum at the University of Texas at El Paso where he supervises the Chihuahuan Desert Garden. He is also a frequent contributor to this newsletter. He can be reached via email at anderson@utep.edu.

Carlsbad Chapter Part of Joint Effort to Create Native Plant Garden

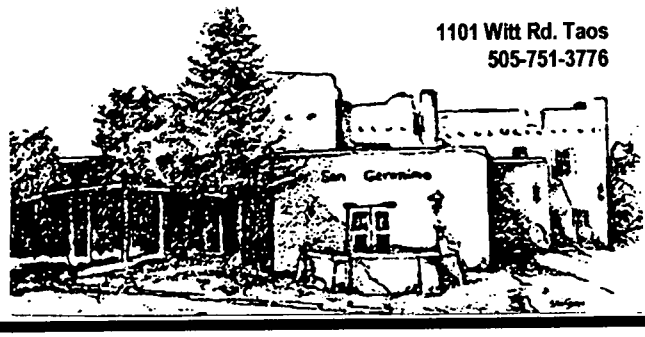
The Carlsbad Chapter of the NPSNM has not been very active in recent years, despite efforts by a few members to plan field trips and meetings. But an exciting new project has appeared quite literally on Carlsbad's horizon, and it is hoped this will spark renewed interest within the membership.

The City of Carlsbad has recently built a small parking lot atop a prominent ridge above the town and within the boundaries of Living Desert State Park Zoo and Gardens. Parking lots are generally not greeted with enthusiasm by plant persons, but this one is special. It was built at what will be the trailhead for a new nature/hiking trail slated for construction this summer. The trail will run from the top of the hill — a trailing edge of the Guadalupe Mountains — down to State Highway 285, passing through state park property and skirting the campus of NMSU at Carlsbad. Eventually the trail will cross the highway and continue to two historic structures on the Pecos River: Eddy House, Carlsbad's oldest house, and the Flume.

Carlsbad Chapter members Eric Pierce and Sandra Lynn have been invited to organize the creation of a native plant garden at the trailhead. Other members will also be involved, including horticultural expert Dean Ricer.

The working concept at this point, according to Sandra Lynn, is a native-plant garden on top of the hill, in the midst of the natural landscape of limestone, yucca, ocotillo, juniper, and prickly pear. The primary purpose of the garden, which will be located in a bare area left after construction of the parking lot is completed, will be educational, to demonstrate native vegetation in a garden setting without irrigation, and to provide an introduction to the native plants that will be seen on future guided walks along the trail.

The whole project — trail, garden, guided walks, and eventual signage — will happen through the partnership of the City of Carlsbad Community Development Office, the Living Desert State Park Zoo and Gardens, the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, and the Chihuahuan Desert Conservation Alliance, as well as other future partners. ***Sandra Lynn***



Sacramento Mountains Grant Cont'd

Pictured from left to right are: Demaris Howell, owner of Season's Nursery; Bob Hall, Chapter President; Debi Myers, Season's Nursery, and Roger Sowder, Principal of Nob Hill Early Childhood Center.

Cont'd: Nob Hill Early Childhood Educational Landscaping Project.

The native garden project covers an area of approximately 1,800 square feet, which will be planted and hardscaped over a two-year period. Plans for the garden include wildflower areas (planted and seeded), an annual flower garden (seeded), and a variety of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and groundcovers. Each plant will be marked with a sign indicating its scientific name (family, genus, species) as well as its common name.

The native plant garden will also include walking paths and seating areas. At the March meeting of the Sacramento Mountains Chapter, members discussed designs for the garden, drafted landscaping plans, and made recommendations for planting, hardscaping, and long-term care and maintenance of the garden.

Additional help is being given by Seasons Nursery, owned by Demaris Howell. As part of the overall project, she and employee Debra Meyers, both chapter members, conducted a program on landscaping tips at the Nob Hill school.

"We're looking forward to seeing what the Native Plant Society has planned for our garden," said Roger Sowder, principal of Nob Hill Early Childhood Center, and himself a new member of the Chapter. "The group has some excellent and innovative ideas for a wonderful garden space for our children and for the community."

First-year objectives are to build berms, complete a rock arroyo, lay out walking paths, spread top soil and conditioners, install the major plants, seed the wildflower areas, plant the annual garden, install signage, and maintain the garden.

WANTED: Sharp, Colorful Cactus

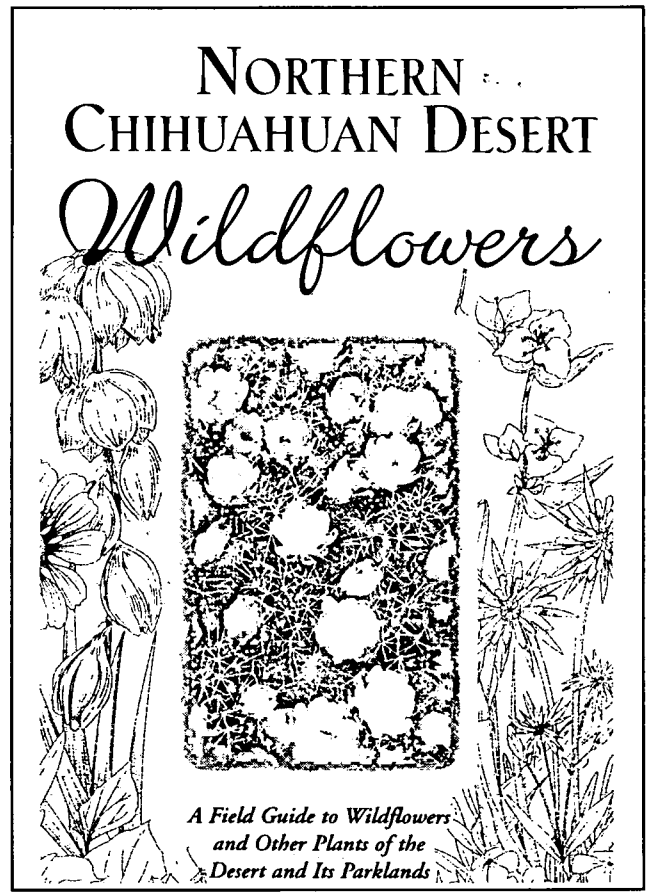
slides for a new NPSNM poster. The best will be on our web site and entered in our photo contest. Winners will have their pics in the poster and get a free copy of Jean Heflin's book *Penstemons: The Beautiful Beardtongues of New Mexico*. Send slides to Bob Sivinski, 3 Camino Mayacita, Santa Fe 87501. They'll be returned in 3 months.

Book Reviews

Northern Chihuahuan Desert Wildflowers

by Steve West

Falcon Publishing, Helena MT, 2000
Softcover edition, 221 pages
ISBN 1-56044-980-2 $24.95



Exploring our desert flora with this well-illustrated guide will be rewarding for both those who are already familiar with desert plants, and those who are newcomers to the area. This user-friendly field guide samples 261 of the more common and characteristic plants of West Texas and Southern New Mexico. Awareness and appreciation of native flora can help us to preserve this fragile habitat.

This book focuses on plants found within eight National Park Service areas of the region. In his introduction, West portrays these significant natural areas with descriptions so inviting, you'll want to visit these parks and check things out for yourself. The author expresses special affection for Big Bend National Park: "Though...somewhat isolated, once you are there, it is a difficult place to leave."

Chihuahuan Profile

Another part of the introduction defines the Chihuahuan Desert, giving climate and geographic statistics, descriptions of different physiological provinces, and descriptions of various indigenous plant communities. The picture that emerges is astonishing: the U.S. portion of the Chihuahuan Desert contains at least 1,500 species of plants. Moreover, there are countless specialized plant habitats in elevations ranging from 820 ft. to 6,562 ft. There are moist places, rocky places, and salty places; there are grasslands and woodlands, and everything in-between. Here, he also describes what to look for in identifying plants.

Identification

Plants are grouped in three major categories: cacti and other succulents; flowers organized by color; and trees, shrubs, and other plants. People with limited botanical knowledge normally find it easier to identify plants with the help of photos, rather than by reading lengthy and often very technical descriptions. The photos are inviting and many show plants in full flower and in beautiful — and often revealing — natural habitats. For example, on page 47, we see a dry, rocky slope with a blooming ocotillo and a strawberry hedgehog obviously thriving in this harsh landscape. Similarly, the photo of creeping barberry on page 144 tells us that this plant grows in woodlands where pine needles cover the soil. Other photos could even be described as lyrical, notably the gyp ringstem on page 65, the basketflower on page 111, and the slimlobe globeberry on page 137.

Team Effort

Some 25 talented photographers contributed to this guide, with Brent Wauer providing over 100 of the images. Each photograph is accompanied by a brief description of the plant, its range and habitat information, as well as observations from the author. Common and scientific names, and plant family round out the plant portrait.

My only criticism is that some of the tree descriptions might have been more effective had close-up photographs of the leaves been included.

Lisa Mandelkern

Excerpt from speech given by President Theodore Roosevelt at the Grand Canyon in 1903. In 1908, he proclaimed the Grand Canyon a National Monument, and in the year of his death, 1919, it was proclaimed a National Park.

"Leave it as it is. You cannot improve on it. The ages have been at work on it, and man can only mar it. What you can do is to keep it for your children, your children's children, and for all who come after you, as one of the great rights which every American, if he can travel at all, should see. We have gotten past the stage, my fellow citizens, when we are to be pardoned if we treat any part of our country as something to be skinned for two or three years for the use of the present generation, whether it be the forest, the water, the scenery. Whatever it is, handle it so that your children's children will get the benefit of it."

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