

## Native Plant Society of New Mexico

# NEWSLETTER

October, November, December 2003 Volume XXVIII Number 4

## ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS LOS ALAMOS FIRE & RECOVERY



**Terry Foxx talked about post-fire recovery in Los Alamos and showed off her book, *Out of the Ashes*.**

The annual NPSNM meeting was hosted by the Santa Fe chapter in Los Alamos at UNM-Los Alamos on August 7-10. By all accounts it was a great success with some 150 members attending. The theme, "*Restoration and Recovery*," gave structure to most of the talks, hikes and other activities. Three years after the devastation of the Cerro Grande Fire, attendees could see recovery and hear about both professional and volunteer restoration efforts. Talks covered the causes and remedies and how the ecosystem can be modified to aid in its recovery.

Also featured were gardening, wildflower hikes, and ethnobotany. One well-received event was the panel on the status of herbaria within the state (including El Paso). The NPS Board is considering a proposal to make funds available to herbaria for upkeep and maintenance of collections. Books sales were brisk, the native plant sale featured state-wide species, and the silent auction offered an eclectic variety of sometimes hotly contested items. The Friday evening reception provided relaxed sociability at the Keller home, rebuilt and re-landscaped after the fire.

At Saturday's banquet, honors were given by the Governor's office to Dewitt Ivey for his tireless work on flora of New Mexico, and by the NPSNM and Los Alamos County Council to Craig Martin and John Hogan, founders of the Los Alamos Volunteer Task Force for restoration and education after the fire. Keynoter Gary Ziehe, executive director of the newly established Valles Caldera National Preserve, told of the grand experiment at the VCNP to allow moderate cattle grazing while preserving a wilderness that can be visited and enjoyed by the public. Perhaps the highlight of the meeting was the bus trip deep into the VCNP with interpretive talks by the preserve naturalist and others studying the native plant diversity there.

*Chick and Yvonne Keller*

### INSIDE

- \* Apiaceae...4
- \* Annual Meeting Pics...6-7
- \* Meet Lorrie Otto...8
- \* GOP Inside Info...9
- \* Mountain Geraniums...13
- \* Bye-bye Piñons?...14

## Letters to the Editor

We returned home after the 2003 Annual Meeting to more email verbiage than we could ever imagine, concerning the role of the list-server, plant conservation and the political implications. This letter is to inform our membership of the internet debate over the role of the NPSNM in conservation and politics, and to identify our personal views, keeping in mind that the NPSNM is a 501(c)(3) organization.

Most of the emails concerned a decision the Board of the NPSNM made at least two years ago to become an active partner with the Native Plant Conservation Campaign (NPCC). Since we joined ranks with them Bob Sivinski has been providing an important service to our membership by passing on articles via the list-server covering a wide range of subjects — most of which pertain to threatened and endangered species, water conservation, threats to the native flora from introduced species, the politics of conservation, and the list goes on. Martha and I send money each year to the NPCC because they are performing tasks nationally that the NPSNM should be performing in New Mexico.

We recognize that the plants we add or remove from our property make a political statement. We know the plants sold in local nurseries are critical to either conserving or destroying our native flora. Years of experience tell us that we must continually follow the activities of state and federal agencies if we wish to conserve native plants — all major reasons for the existence of the NPSNM.

What educated person living in the U.S. today could possibly think that these are not political activities? How could anyone exposed to the national and local news *not* understand that the conservation of our flora and fauna is highly political? If you do not take a tough stand on these issues, you are playing a big role in the destruction of the green mantle that protects all living things. If the NPSNM does not fight to protect our state and national parks and forests, conserve habitats, and protect native plant species, who will?

As President Bush joked to a crowd of Washington insiders soon after his inauguration, "You can fool some of the people all the time, and those are the ones you need to concentrate on."

*Jack & Martha Carter  
Gila Chapter*

I am a new member of the NPSNM and am writing to inform the membership of a new xeriscape demonstration garden. I am a research scientist with New Mexico State University and began planting the garden during the spring/summer of 2002 at the university's Agricultural Science Center at Farmington. The center is located about 8 miles (as the crow flies) southwest of Farmington on the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project.

At present, more than 90 different drought tolerant, mostly native, species are growing in the garden. Some of my favorites include desert willow, red yucca, native potentilla, soap tree and banana yucca, red cinquefoil, blue mist spirea, lanceleaf coreopsis, purple iceplant, Apache plume, sunrose, scarlet gilia, perennial blueflax, numerous penstemons, western sandcherry, rock sage, and California brickellbush.

The garden has been split into four sections with at least one individual of each species being represented in each section. The sections will be irrigated at different regimes using a 3-zone, above-ground, drip irrigation system to evaluate relative drought-tolerance and water requirements of each species. One section will not receive supplemental irrigation.

Local society members, and all others traveling in the Four Corners area are welcome to visit the garden on weekdays between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. However, it is advisable to call ahead at (505) 327-7757 for directions and to verify that someone will be available to show the garden. I believe that Jan Rees (San Juan Chapter) will be coordinating a tour of the garden next June and I'm sure it will be listed in 'Chapter Activities & Events' before then.

*Dan Smeal  
San Juan Chapter*

**"Growth for the sake of  
growth is the ideology of  
the cancer cell."**

*Edward Abbey*

**"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower."**

*Albert Camus*

**"One good thing about snow...it makes your lawn look as good as your neighbor's."**

*Anonymous*

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 those of 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 NOV 24, 2003**

**Membership** in the NPSNM is open to anyone supporting our goals of promoting a greater appreciation of native plants and their environment and 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. A wide selection of books dealing with plants, landscaping, and other environmental issues are available at discount prices. The Society has also produced two New Mexico wildflower posters by artist Niki Threlkeld and a cacti poster designed by Lisa Mandelkern. These can be ordered from our Poster Chair or Book Sales representative.

**Proofreaders:** Jane Mygatt, Beryl Schwartz, Donna Stevens, Sally Wasowski, Jackie Tamas and Ann Ellen Tuomey.

**Mailing:** Carolyn Gressitt



*Wholesale/Retail  
Quality  
Hardy Cacti  
of the Southwest*

505-835-0687  
2188 NM Hwy 1  
Socorro, NM 87801

Visit our website at:  
[www.riogrande-cacti.com](http://www.riogrande-cacti.com)

**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, TX
- 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
Friend of Society.....	\$30
Supporting Member.....	\$50
Sponsor.....	\$100
Patron .....	\$250
Benefactor.....	\$500
Life Member.....	\$1,000
Limited Income, Family, Students & Seniors (65+).....	\$12

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

**Make your check payable to  
NPSNM  
and send to  
Membership Secretary  
P.O.Box 2364, Las Cruces NM 88004**

# THE APEX OF BEAUTY: APIACEAE

by Donna Stevens

*This article is the third in a series about flowering plant families. Knowing the characteristics of the major plant families is essential for learning the native flora.*

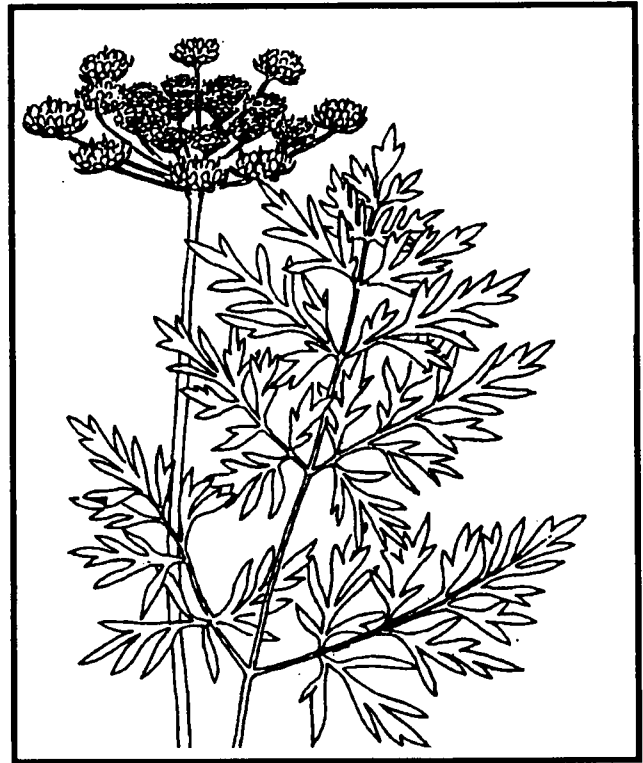
The Apiaceae (Carrot Family), with its graceful, delicate flowers, is one of my personal favorites. Plants in the Apiaceae are easy to recognize because their flowers, though small, are numerous, and are arranged in umbels, a type of inflorescence with all the pedicels (flower stalks) arising from a central, common point of attachment. Compound umbels, the usual arrangement in Apiaceae flowers, are composed of many umbels, all attached to the stem at the same point.

Confused? Picture this: a bunch of miniature upside-down umbrellas, with a tiny flower at the outside end of each spoke, and all the umbrella handles meeting at one point, and you have the general idea of a compound umbel. The alternate name for this family, Umbelliferae, means "bearer of umbels."

If you strain your eyes (or use a hand lens), you can see five petals, five stamens, and two styles in each flower. You won't have to strain to spot the leaves, which are usually large, compound, and deeply lobed. The stems in this plant family are often hollow, and many of the plants are aromatic.

The Apiaceae Members are garden regulars, in the form of parsnips, celery, and carrots. In fact, the family is derived from the generic name for celery, *Apium*. Dill, parsley, cilantro, caraway, coriander, cumin, fennel and anise all belong to this family.

New Mexican herbalists regularly recommend osha (*Ligusticum porteri*) to their clients. But be careful: poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) looks quite similar to osha; it too will cure what ails you, but in a more final way! Water hemlock (*Cicuta douglasii*) is another deadly member of The Apiaceae.



*Pseudocymopterus montanus* Mountain parsley  
Robert DeWitt Ivey

One wildflower you're likely to encounter in New Mexico is mountain parsley (*Pseudocymopterus montanus*), with flowers that are usually yellow, but sometimes maroon. Other wildflowers include cowbane (*Oxypolis fendleri*), wild carrot (*Daucus pusillus*) and Indian parsley (*Cymopterus bulbosus*).

Are there any other families that can be confused with the Apiaceae? The most likely candidate is the Araliaceae (Ginger Family), which also has flowers in umbels, and counts *Panax*, or ginseng, among its illustrious family members. Not to worry. There is only one member of the Araliaceae in New Mexico: *Aralia racemosa*, a tall, semi-woody perennial of high elevations. None of the New Mexican Apiaceae members are shrubs.

Now you're ready to search out the Apiaceae. They're more than just the garnish on your plate! #

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
on the environment:  
"Don't worry about that!"

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Lisa Mandelkern 526-0917 lisamand@zianet.com
Vice-President	Wynn Anderson 915-533-6072 wanderson@utep.edu
Recording Sec'y	Betsy Hall 258-2440 bobnbets@zianet.com
Membership Sec'y	John Freyermuth 523-8413 jfreyerm@lib.nmsu.edu
Treasurer	Don Tribble 585-9017 gecko@netmdc.com

## BOARD REPS

Albuquerque/Tiana Scott	323-1697
Carlsbad/Sandra Lynn	234-1772 slynn@cavern.nmsu.edu
El Paso/Ed Freeman	915-584-3742 freeman@utep.edu
Gila/Jack Carter	388-9221 jmcarter@zianet.com
Las Cruces/Terry Peterson	523-5295 terrywp@zianet.com
Otero/Chris Baker	434-9291 ravensnest@direcway.com
Sacramento Mts/Fred Kilian	258-5295 fmkilian@yahoo.com
San Juan/Nancy Rominger-Abe	320-0567 plantscapes@fisi.net
Santa Fe/Chick Keller	662-7915 alfanso@cybermesa.com
Taos/Judy Lister	776-1183 glister@newmex.com

Book Sales	Lisa Johnston 748-1046 nps_nmbooks@hotmail.com
Poster Chair	Mary Whitmore 454-0683 whitmore@newmexico.com
T-Shirt Sales	Lisa Mandelkern 526-0917 lisamand@zianet.com
Web Site Editor	Lolly Jones 771-8020 ljones20@comcast.net
Newsletter Ed.	Andy Wasowski 776-1498 andrzej@laplaza.org
Conservation	Jim Nellessen 867-7905 jnellessen1@taschek.net
Finance	Jack Carter 388-9221 jmcarter@zianet.com
Publications	Sally Wasowski 776-1497 magpiemum@yahoo.com

## CHAPTER CONTACTS

Albuquerque	Beth Herschman 892-2230 bherschman@aol.com
Carlsbad	Sandra Lynn 234-1772 slynn@cavern.nmsu.edu
El Paso	Wynn Anderson 915-533-6072 wanderson@utep.edu
Gila	Judy Muncrief 388-4771 ranchito@zianet.com
Las Cruces	Lisa Mandelkern 526-0917 lisamand@zianet.com
Otero	John Stockert 585-2546 jwstockert@msn.com
Sacramento	Robert Hall 258-2440 bobnbets@zianet.com
San Juan	Jan Rees 632-8335 jrees@acrnet.com
Santa Fe	Chick Keller 662-7915 alfanso@cybermesa.com
Taos	Ann Smith 737-9611 asmith@laplaza.org

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



*Enchanted*  
**GARDENS** LLC

For the Finest Garden Products

Native flowers 413 W. Griggs Ave.  
Native trees & shrubs Las Cruces, NM 88005  
Herbs & perennials Tues-Sat 10 a.m.-6 p.m.  
the LC nature store 505-524-1886  
*The place for avid gardeners to meet!*



*AGUA FRIA NURSERY*  
Specializing in Native Plants

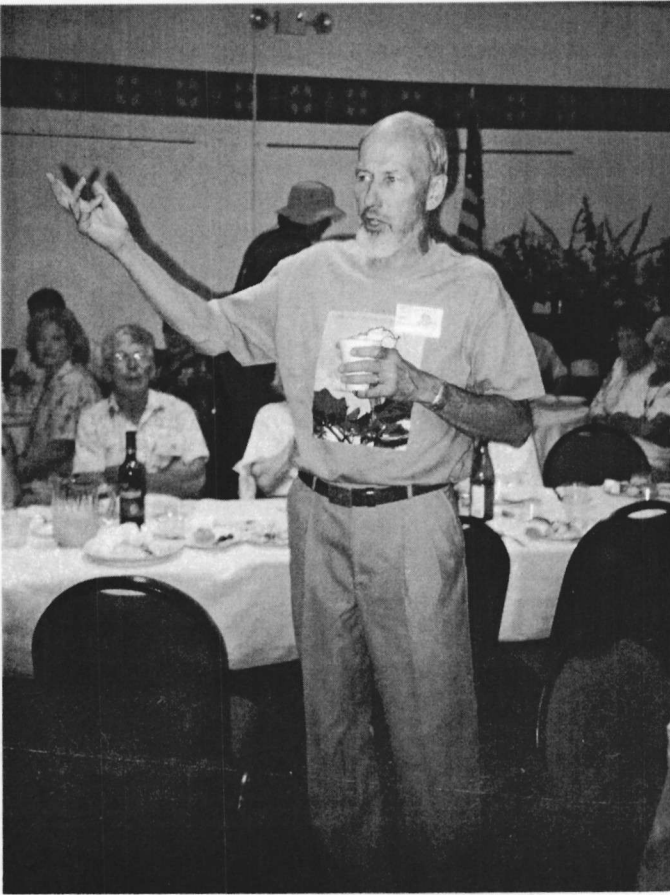
1409 Agua Fria  
Santa Fe 87505-0907  
505-983-4831  
FAX 505-983-3593  
aguafrianr@aol.com

## NEW NPSNM T-SHIRT



Light brown and 100% cotton. Color design shows *Datura wrightii*. Sizes M, L & XL. Bulk orders can be placed by NPS/NM chapters. Please find someone in your chapter who will handle the whole chapter order. Sorry, no individual orders. Wholesale price for chapters is \$ 9.00, recommended resale price is \$15.00. Chapters keep the profit. All orders must be pre-paid. Contact Lisa Mandelkern for an order form which takes you step by step through the ordering process. [lisamand@zianet.com](mailto:lisamand@zianet.com) or (505) 526 0917.

# 2003 ANNUAL MEETING



Two merlots and an aria from "La Traviata."



It's amazing how much fun you can have and still stay sober!



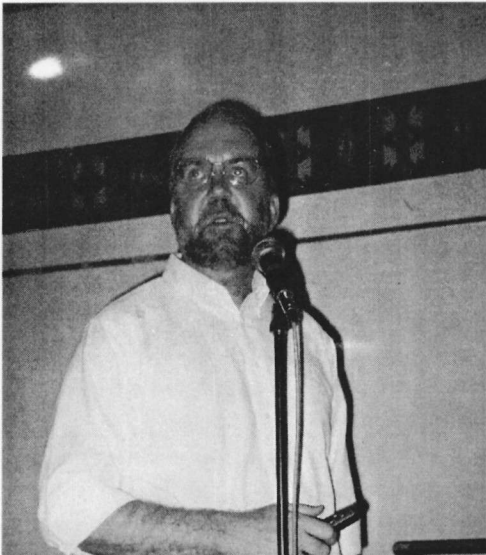
Suddenly it hits the Taos Chapter — They won't have to host an annual meeting again for 8 more years!



...and the next slide is me para-sailing in Cancun.



Not much of a banquet if you ask me...What? Oh, it's just the hors oeuvres? Never mind!



The last talk I gave, they served steak!



Ummmph! Nobody said there'd be an obstacle course!



Okay, guys...fun's fun. Now gimme the key so we can get outta here!



And here's where we buried Fluffy.

## Lorrie Otto, Prairie Queen

by Carol Chew, Mandy Ploch and Bret Rappaport

Reprinted with permission from The Wild Ones Journal



*ED: From time to time I'll introduce you to some native plant folks from other parts of the USA. It is, after all, nice to know we are not fighting the good fight alone. Sally and I met Lorrie Otto in 1992, and it was love at first sight. She continues to inspire us with her enthusiasm and energy. We are proud to be counted among her many friends.*

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, but rather borrow it from our descendants." Lorrie Otto's words aptly summarize her life and legacy. In the last decade, the natural landscaping movement took root and spread from coast to coast. Lorrie Otto planted the seeds of the movement.

Lorrie was born Mary Lorraine Stoeber in 1919 near Madison, Wisconsin. Her love of nature traces back to long, hot summers traipsing behind her father as he guided the horse-drawn plow, soil squishing between her toes, studying unearthed grubs and worms. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin, married Owen Otto, a psychiatrist, and moved to a north Milwaukee suburb, a block from Lake Michigan.

Her suburban area was blessed with a twenty-acre ravine, called Fairy Chasm, in which children played and nature reigned. But in the late 1950s, plans were made to sell the chasm and to build in it. Lorrie turned naturalist, crusader, and teacher.

It took a decade, but in 1969 The Nature Conservancy took title to those twenty acres.

In the 1950s and 1960s, it was common practice to spray for mosquitoes on a weekly basis with DDT. After each spraying, Lorrie found birds strewn about, twitching, soon to die. She became a founding board member of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and the Citizens Natural Resources Association and led the assault on DDT. In 1970, Wisconsin became the first state to outlaw it. Wisconsin's senator Gaylord Nelson, initiator of Earth Day, carried the battle along to Washington, D.C., and by 1972, DDT had been banned nationally.

Lorrie views the typical suburban monoculture of lawn as "immoral," but she believes the vast expanse of land occupied by suburban development could, instead, be considered an environmental opportunity: "If suburbia were landscaped with meadows, prairies, thickets, or forests, or combinations of these, then the water would sparkle, fish would be good to eat again, birds would sing and human spirits would soar."

She started by turning her own one-acre property back to nature. The Ottos moved to a landscape of lawn, a tulip bed, and sixty-four Norway spruces. To the consternation of the neighbors, they cut down the non-native spruces and planted asters, goldenrod, and ferns. By the first Earth Day, 1970, it looked as if the house had been dropped onto a prairie.

However, town officials saw only weeds. A village worker was sent out and got to the fern garden with a mower before he was stopped. Since winning the battle with her own town, she has helped others to view natural landscaping as a public good rather than as a health hazard.

In 1979, Lorrie helped start The Wild Ones, an organization dedicated to promoting natural landscaping. The Wild Ones boasts 3,000 members in 40 chapters, in eleven states and Canada.

Lorrie Otto continues to serve the community by teaching, lecturing, acting as witness and advisor in legal matters, and communicating through TV, radio and publications. She has planted the seeds of natural landscaping in the hearts of thousands. These, in turn, have left a legacy to future generations by returning their own patches of the biosphere to nature. #



**JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER  
JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER  
JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER JUDY LISTER**

In the last newsletter's Volunteer Profile feature, the full name of the honoree, Judy Lister, was lost when the printer scanned in her photo and inadvertently covered over her name. You were only able to read about a mysterious "Judy" in the Taos Chapter. Of course, we who belong to that chapter know very well who "Judy" is. Now the rest of you do, too.

## Green Talk, Brown Walk

*Editor: The following is reprinted from The Green Elephant, the newsletter of REP (Republicans for Environmental Protection) America, an organization that calls itself the environmental conscience of the GOP, and one that I told you about in an earlier newsletter:*

Clearly, it wasn't intended for public consumption. It was leaked. Hooray for the leaker!

Republican strategists are finally acknowledging that despite a few good initiatives — like the EPA's new non-road diesel rules — our party is mostly on the wrong side of environmental issues in the public eye. As GOP pollster Frank Luntz wrote in his secret "Straight Talk" memo, the environment is the single biggest vulnerability for the Republicans and especially George W. Bush. That realization is the good news.

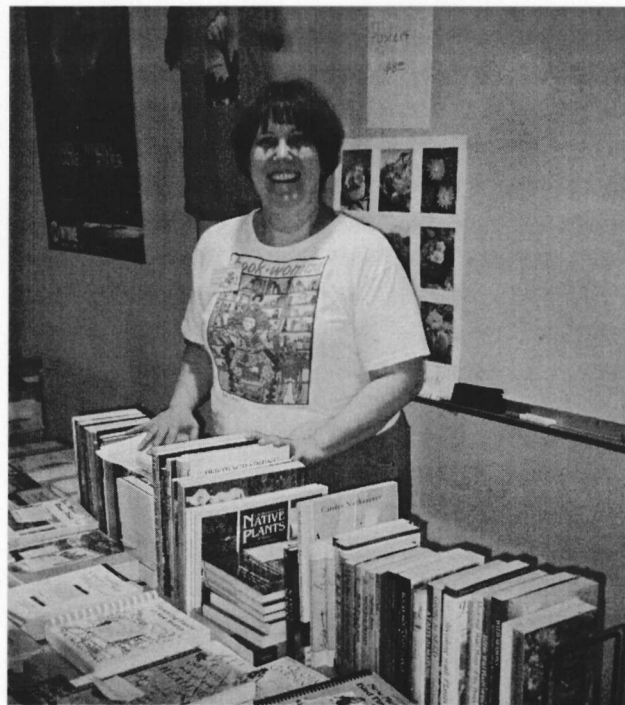
The bad news is that Luntz — the creator of 1994's famous Contract with America — doesn't recommend that the GOP do anything other than "sound better" on environmental issues. His memo makes no recommendation that party honchos actually *behave* better.

## ABOVE & BEYOND

From time to time we'd like to acknowledge NPSNM members who donate more than the regular annual dues. The following signed on as Sponsors at the \$100 level. Thanks!

**Albuquerque:** Eugene Jercinovic,  
Peggy Owens **Gila:** Mike & Cathy Holmberg,  
Larry & Celinda Miller **Santa Fe:** Charles &  
Yvonne Keller, Jim & Babs Peck  
**San Juan:** Jacque Foutz **Taos:** Tom Ladig

## VOLUNTEER PROFILE



**Lisa Johnston**  
**Carlsbad Chapter**

Lisa Johnston is a rare combination of innovator and collaborator, activist and archivist, dreamer and diplomat. For more than 25 years, she has continuously served the NPSNM as newsletter editor, vice-president, president, and now as book sales coordinator.

As long as I've known Lisa, she's been chronically prone to great ideas that insist on being realized. In the early days of NPSNM, while she was newsletter editor, Lisa and a few co-conspirators staged the Southwestern Native Plant Symposium to bring together amateurs and professionals engaged in reclamation, botany, ethnobotany, agronomy and horticulture in both wildland and urban settings. The idea was to give people of overlapping interests the opportunity to get acquainted and pool their knowledge. The immediate result was two days of non-stop activity and published proceedings. It may also have been the seed that sprouted into the ongoing series of statewide meetings.

As the number of publications of interest to native plant enthusiasts began to blossom like wildflowers after rain, Lisa decided what NPS needed was our own book source to gather and spread the wealth. The scope of titles she maintains as coordinator of book sales is typical Lisa: Why do anything well, when you can do it even better? If, to our dismay, Lisa ever "retires," we'll need to create a new title and symbolic mantle of "Glue Emeritus" to drape across her capable, affable shoulders.

*Judith Phillips*

## Chapter Activities & Events

### ALBUQUERQUE

**2nd Thursdays at Albuquerque Garden Center, 10120 Lomas NE, between Eubank and Wyoming**

**Oct. 2:** "Coal Mine Reclamation." Robin Tierney

**Nov. 6:** "Archaeology of the Upland Ecosystems." Matthew Schmader, assistant superintendent of Albuquerque's Open Space division

**Dec. 11:** Christmas potluck and seed exchange. Bring a dish to share. Plates, drinks, and forks provided. Bring seeds to share.

### EL PASO, TX

**Programs 2nd Tuesdays at Centennial Museum on UTEP Campus.**

**Sept, 20-21:** Field trip Chiricahua Mtns, Cochise Co., AZ. led by Wynn Anderson. Call 915-533-6072 for reservations.

**Oct. 9:** "The complex chemistry of creosotebush." Dr. Paul Hyder

**Date TBA. Field trip to McKittrick Canyon, Guadalupe Mtns. National Park, Texas. Late October or early November.**

**Nov.5:** Program and speaker TBA.

### GILA (Silver City)

**Programs at Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus, 7 PM. Field trips meet at 8 AM in south parking lot of WNMU Fine Arts Center.**

**Oct 10-11:** Grass Workshop, Bill Norris, Assist. Prof. of Biology, WNMU. Registration: 505-388-7832.

**Oct. 17:** "Native Plant Revegetation." Lou Naue, San Francisco River Association.

**Nov. 21:** "Sunflowers in New Mexico." Sandra Lynn, Carlsbad Chapter.

**December Holiday Social.** Date and location TBA.

### LAS CRUCES

**Programs 2nd Wednesdays in Conference Room of the Social Center at University Terrace, Good Samaritan Village, 3011 Buena Vida Circle at 7 PM.**

**Oct. 8:** "Birds of Ramsey Canyon Preserve (Arizona) and the nearby San Pedro River basin" in preparation for annual overnight trip on October 11.

**Oct. 11: Overnight field trip to Nature Conservancy Ramsey Canyon Preserve near Sierra Vista, Arizona.** This is an ecological crossroads where plants and wild-life from the Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts mingle with those from the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Madre. For details call Katherine Blackett 521-4573.

**Nov. 12:** "Plants of the Sonoran Desert." Rich Spellenberg is author of Falcon Publishing's "Sonoran Desert Wildflowers: A Field Guide to the Common Wildflowers of the Sonoran Desert."

**Dec. 10:** Our annual planning meeting. Your input is important as we plan next year's programs and field trips.

### SACRAMENTO MTS. (Ruidoso)

**October:** Annual Chapter Meeting & Potluck Dinner. Details TBA.

### SAN JUAN (Farmington)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays at 7 PM, venues TBA.**

**Oct. 16:** "Prairie Plants" Charley King

**Oct. 18:** Field trip with Arnold Clifford

**Nov. 20:** Program by BLM personnel

**Dec:** No meeting

### SANTA FE

**Programs 3rd Wednesdays at Randall Davey House Audubon Center, Upper Canyon Road, 7 PM. Programs TBA.**

### TAOS

**2nd Wednesdays at San Geronimo Lodge.**

**Oct. 8:** "Native Trees and Shrubs: Survivors." Carlos Valdez, NMSU Extension Horticulturist, Los Alamos.

**Nov. 2:** "Reviving the Pinyon/Juniper Woodland." Sam Loftin, Plant/Soil Scientist, Los Alamos.

### HAZARDOUS PESTICIDES USED TO SPRAY MOSQUITOES

Chlorpyrifos (Dursban) is being sprayed on communities across the country, according to Beyond Pesticides, a non-profit environmental organization based in Washington DC. "This is an outrage," says Jay Feldman, Executive Director of Beyond Pesticides "given what is known about the chemical's adverse health effects on children and the general population."

As West Nile virus moves across the nation, a chemical industry-dominated EPA is allowing communities to be put at risk. Just as "residential" uses should be phasing out under a June 2000 agreement, "public health" mosquito uses are gearing up, says Feldman.

For additional information on this issue and on Beyond Pesticides, check out their website: [www.beyondpesticides.org](http://www.beyondpesticides.org).

## Taos Chapter Takes a Stand

Concerned and frustrated by seeing Russian olives and tamarisk sold in local nurseries, the Board of the Taos Chapter sent a letter to local nursery owners laying out the problems with these plants and providing suggestions for native alternatives.

While farmers, environmental groups and county agriculture departments spent countless hours combating problems caused by invasive exotics, garden centers encourage the unsuspecting public to plant more.

The letter states "...although these plants have been used in the nursery trade for many years, we feel that it is irresponsible to continue to encourage their use. Toward this end, we provide this list of alternative native plants for you to recommend to customers who inquire about these plants."

GOAL	BAD CHOICE	NATIVE ALTERNATIVE
Silver foliage	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i> (Russian olive)	<i>Shepherdia argentea</i> (silver buffaloberry) <i>Forestiera neomexicana</i> (New Mexico olive/privet)
Shade tree	<i>Ulmus pumila</i> (Siberian elm)	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> (narrowleaf cottonwood) <i>Populus fremontii</i> (Rio Grande cottonwood)
Flowering tree or shrub	<i>Tamarix</i> spp. (salt cedar)	<i>Prunus virginiana</i> (chokecherry) <i>Sorbus scopulina</i> (Rocky Mountain ash) <i>Prunus Americana</i> (wild plum) <i>Fallugia paradoxa</i> (Apache plume)

The Taos Board hopes that next growing season, the nurseries will offer better guidance to their customers. The Board is happy to share the letter with other members. Contact Ann Smith (asmith@laplaza.org or 505.737.9611) for a copy of the letter and its attachments.

## XERISCAPE CONFERENCE

**Theme:** "Water: Our Future, Our Legacy."

**Location:** Albuquerque Convention Center.

**Dates:** October 17th and 18th, 2003.

**Keynote** addresses by Dr. Peter Gleick, an internationally recognized expert on global freshwater resources and Amy Vickers, author of the award-winning *Handbook of Water Use and Conservation: Homes, Landscapes, Businesses, Industries, Farms*.

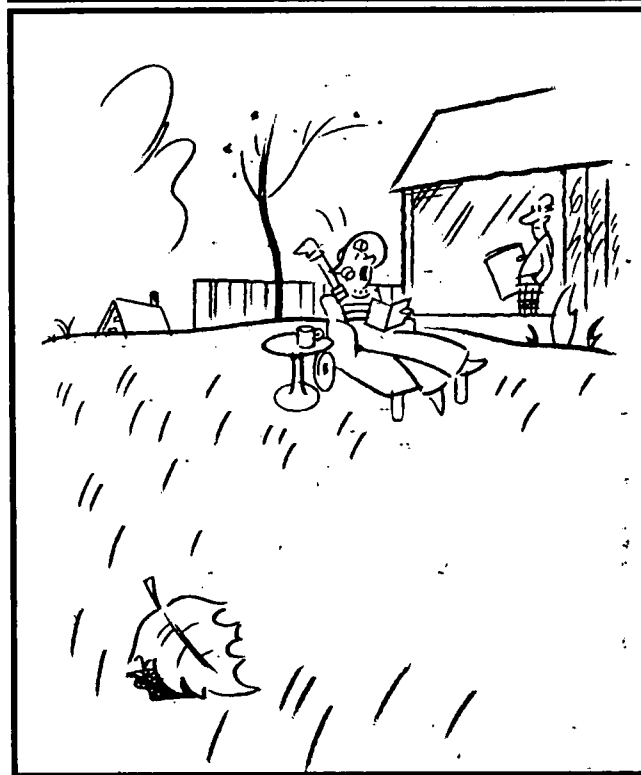
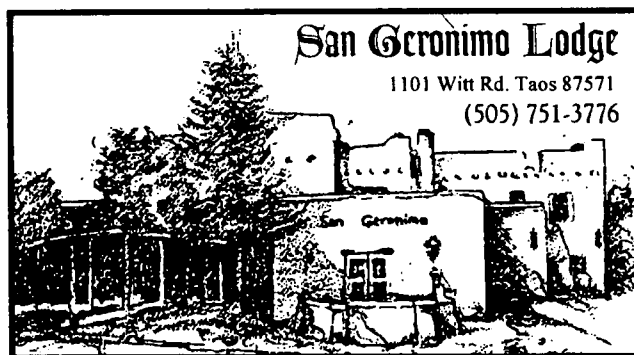
**Registration fee** of \$100 includes all presentations, educational materials, lunches, refreshments, and admission to the exhibit hall. Call (505) 468-1021 or visit the website at [www.xeriscapenm.com](http://www.xeriscapenm.com).

## Pesticides and Health

A Colorado State University study linked depression and pesticide exposure among farm workers and residents.

Researchers found that over-exposure to agricultural chemicals can lead to long-term mental health problems, according to Lorann Stallones, CSU psychology professor. "Farmers poisoned by agricultural pesticides containing organophosphates are nearly six times as likely to suffer depression in their lifetimes."

In addition, past studies have found that farm workers have a higher rate of suicide compared to other workers.



**"Get out the leaf blower, George!"**

From *Requiem for a Lawnmower*, 2nd Edition, Sally & Andy Wasowski  
Cartoon by Vahan Shirvanian



# WaterWise Landscapes, Inc.

Drought Tolerant Perennials, Herbs, and Natives  
Design, Installation, and Maintenance

J. Hunter Ten Broeck Albuquerque, N.M. 87107  
505-344-7508



## The Best Selection of Organic & Gourmet Foods in Taos

623 Paseo del Pueblo Norte \* 758-1148

# We may be in Arizona, but WE GROW NEW MEXICO NATIVES

10020 W. Glendale Ave  
Glendale AZ 85307  
Toll Free 800-840-8509  
Fax 623-247-6354



# PLANTS OF THE SOUTHWEST

## Native Plants & Seeds



Wildflowers  
Drought Tolerant Grasses  
Shrubs & Trees  
Open-pollinated Vegetables & Chiles  
Great Book Selection  
Color Catalog

Albuquerque  
6680 4th Street, NW  
505-344-8830

Santa Fe  
3095 Agua Fria  
505-438-8888

[www.plantsofthesouthwest.com](http://www.plantsofthesouthwest.com)



# Blossoms GARDEN CENTER

Native & Xeric Plants & Grasses  
*to help you meet the challenges of  
High Desert Gardening*

## 758-1330

Ranchos de Taos, N.M.



## BERNARDO BEACH

native and climate-adapted plants

for beautiful easy care gardens  
that attract songbirds,  
hummingbirds, and butterflies

from our backyard to yours

3729 Arno Street NE

in Albuquerque

open daily March through October

winter hours by appointment

345-6248



# MOUNTAIN GERANIUMS

*Thomas Doan and Bohyun Kim*

Hiking in northern New Mexico is more enjoyable when there are abundant wild flowers. Among the wildflowers flowering from June to October are the several species of *Geranium*. Our native geraniums are quite different from those from the florist or most greenhouses. Greenhouse "geraniums" are from South Africa and belong to the genus *Pelargonium*, and are usually identified as *Pelargonium zonale*.

The genus *Geranium* contains about 300 species worldwide and of those four species are native to New Mexico. They grow from 1-2 feet tall with 1-inch flowers and 5 rounded white to purple petals with darker veins. The beautiful veined petals not only attract our eyes but insects as well. The veins of our native geraniums reflect light in the ultraviolet which helps direct insects to the nectar at the base of the petals, thus increasing their chances for pollination.

Our mountain geraniums have leaves that are basal, divided into 5-6 lobes and measuring from 2 to 4 inches wide. They distribute themselves from seeds and by thick woody rhizomes (underground stems) that clone new flower stalks at the tips.

The seed nodes possess a long beak resembling the bill of a crane or stork. In fact, *Geranium* comes from the Greek word *geranos* meaning crane.

In northern New Mexico the most common species is Richardson geranium (*Geranium richardsonii*) which has white petals with purple veins, sepals with awns and petals exceeding the sepals, petals pilose on the basal half and spreading reddish gland tipped hairs on the stems. This perennial species is common in the southern Rockies, occurring in moist to wet environments along streams and in moist mountain meadows, and is common throughout the Wheeler Wilderness area in Taos County.

Two other species have petals that noticeably exceed the sepals and both are also perennials. Common wild geranium (*Geranium caespitosum*) has petals white to pink or even deep purple, pilose at the base (1/4" to 1/2" length) and with visible awned sepals between the petals. The base of the plant is densely covered in old petiole bases and stipules; the plants may be glandular or eglandular-pubescent. It is common in the sagebrush, pinyon-

juniper, Gambel oak and ponderosa pine montane scrub communities. Sticky geranium (*Geranium viscosissimum*) is lavender-pink or violet with purple or dark reddish veins, pilose at the base for about 1/4 of their length, sepals with awns, pedicels pilose to glandular, and, if glandular, the gland tips are not red. Our species in New Mexico belong to the variety *incisum* that have eglandular pubescence on the petioles and lower stems and leaves. They occur in moist soils in well-drained habitats.

The last species, *Geranium carolinianum*, (from the Carolinas) is an annual or biennial species with small pale pink to rose petals, usually just exceeding, but occasionally equal to or shorter than the sepals. It occurs in wet meadows.



These native geraniums have many uses. Like the Blackfoot people, hikers often add pieces of the roots, leaves or rhizomes into their food supplies as a preservative. The plants also have hemostatic or astringent properties. Hikers in high elevations apply a wet pounded root into the nostrils for nose-bleed or drink a tea for diarrhea. Native Americans used geraniums as astringents to treat hemorrhages, mouth sores, and arthritis. Riders commonly apply the wet crushed roots and rhizomes to saddle sores on horses to stop bleeding or as an aid in healing fresh abrasions. Because of the high tannin content in the geraniums, frequent use is not advisable.

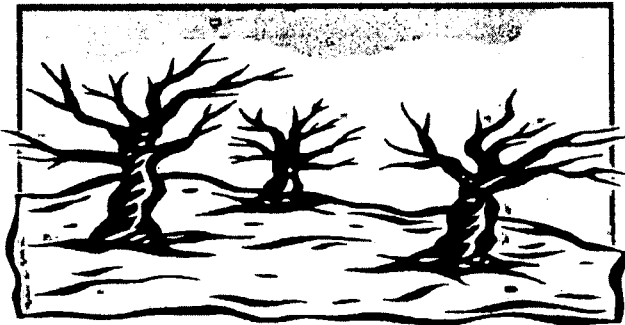
We thank Dr. John E. Ubelaker for comments on this manuscript.

*Tom and Bohyun are biology majors at SMU.*

# Pining Away?

In an article by Tom Sharpe, published last August 2nd, *The Santa Fe New Mexican* warned that northern New Mexico and parts of southern Colorado could lose 80 to 85 percent of their piñons by 2006.

The article, "*Dying Trees: Blessing or Disaster?*," quoted a number of tree experts who claim that the "change should create a healthier, more fireproof landscape."



According to Michelle Nolde, wildlife/urban interface specialist for Santa Fe, Mother Nature is "resetting our ecosystem to a more open, grassy savanna, probably more what it was originally. From a fire perspective," she adds, "that's going to make us in much better shape."

Randy Balice, a forester working at Los Alamos National Laboratory, calls the die-off, "nature's way of reducing the fire hazard and thinning the woodlands." He calls the die-off "a blessing in disguise."

Rich Atkinson of Southwest Trees in Santa Fe estimated that by 2006, the Santa Fe area will lose 80 to 85 percent of its piñons, plus a large percentage of its taller trees of all species. "We're going to lose the 70 foot-tall spruces. The tall trees, by the end of the decade, are going to be the 30- and 40-footers."

Area pines are under attack from bark beetles and twig beetles which go after the trees that have been stressed due to our long-term drought. With the bark beetles, says Nolde, "it's the whole tree that goes at once. You wake up one morning and you say, 'darn, that tree was green yesterday and it's brown today.' It appears to be overnight, but usually the beetles have been in there a while."

The future of New Mexico's landscape depends on the weather, says Patrick Torres, Santa Fe County Extension Agent. Although the winter saw an almost normal snow accumulation, the summer monsoons haven't materialized. According to the experts, watering is still the best thing to do, even for long-established trees. #



**GREAT OUTDOORS NURSERY**  
& LANDSCAPES

**830-5311**

Native and

- drought-tolerant plants
- trees
- cacti
- yuccas
- agave
- moss rock
- natural bird baths
- benches
- water feature kits

Our emphasis is on place: our relationship to the natural beauty that surrounds us.

Inspired landscape design and installation

10408 2<sup>nd</sup> St NW • Albuquerque



**SANTA ANA GARDEN CENTER NATIVE PLANTS**

<p><b>Retail</b> 960-D Hwy 550 Bernalillo NM 87004 (505) 867-1322</p>	<p><b>Wholesale</b> 2 Dove Rd Bernalillo NM 87004 (505) 867-1323</p>
---	--

**Locally grown perennials, shrubs, trees, and seasonal vegetables**

# Book Reviews

## *NATIVE PLANTS FOR HIGH-ELEVATION WESTERN GARDENS*

Janice Busco and Nancy R. Morin  
Fulcrum Publishing in partnership with  
The Arboretum at Flagstaff, 2003  
Deluxe Paperback \$29.95  
ISBN 1-55591-475-6

### Reviewed by Sally Wasowski

Last summer there were no books on landscaping with native plants at high elevations in the southwest, and now we have two. Ah, riches!

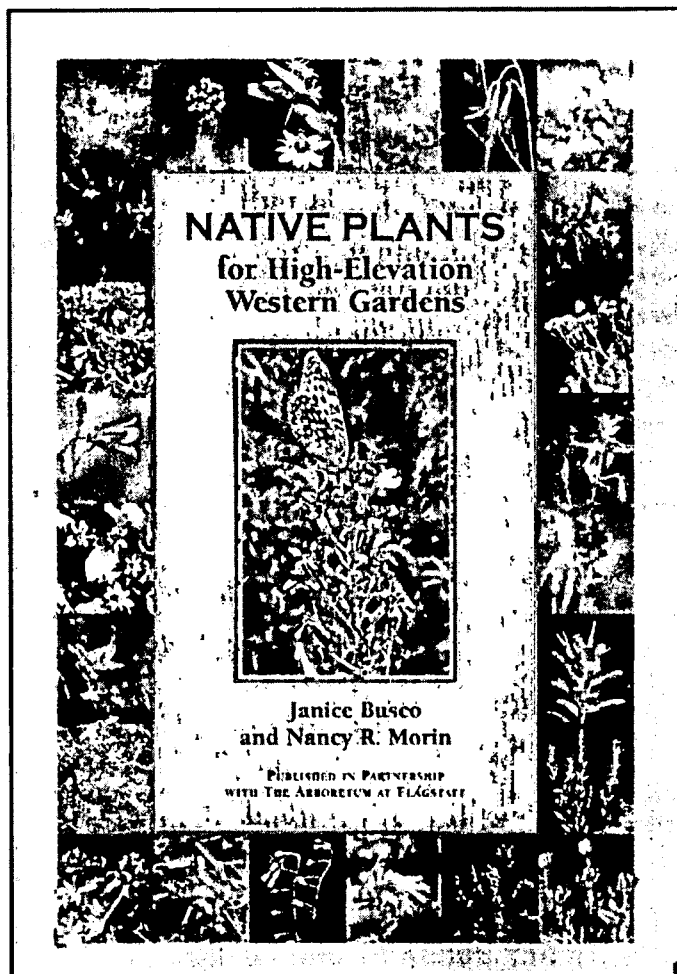
Since I was the primary author of the publication, printed by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico—*Southern Rocky Mountain Gardens: A Native Plant Selection Guide for elevations from 6500 to 8500 feet*—it may seem strange that I am the one to review this new book out of Arizona. But who better knows exactly what each book offers the gardener?

While our book concentrates on how to create habitat gardens with trees, shrubs, flowers, and grasses, the Arizona book is primarily for creating flower gardens. In this book there are no trees and only five flowering shrubs suitable for an herbaceous border. There are two vines, thirteen ornamental grasses, and a treasury of over 120 flowers.

The plants are arranged alphabetically by their scientific names. Each entry has a two page spread giving characteristics, native range, season of bloom, outstanding features, culture (which includes soil, exposure, water use, propagation, and care and maintenance), landscape uses, wildlife attracted, and historical and modern uses, plus additional comments.

Many plants have two photographs — one to show a close up and another to show growth habit. Most of the photography is quite good, showing the plants in full flower for easy identification.

The garden information is excellent. I especially like how the authors recommend companion flowers that prefer the same conditions of sun and moisture, since planting according to water needs is absolutely essential for us.



The whole book resonates with evidence that Janice Busco, one of the authors, has spent twenty years actually working with these plants. Only a few species have detailed propagation tips, but these show hard-won, hands-on knowledge.

The focus for this book is the Arboretum at Flagstaff, and so a few of the plants profiled, such as scented penstemon (*Penstemon palmeri*) and coyote mint (*Monardella odoratissima*), are not native to New Mexico, but I know scented penstemon does well here and coyote mint sounds like it ought to.

A few other selections, such as azure blue sage (*Salvia azurea*) and Maximilian's sunflower (*Helianthus maximilianii*), are native neither to Flagstaff nor us, but to prairie habitats on the eastern side of the Rockies.

As the chart on page *xiv* shows, this book covers elevations from piñons to tundra. The Categories of Water on page 4 with sample plants is very helpful.

So now we in northern New Mexico have two fine reference books. But why choose? Buy both! #

## ARBOR DAY TREE PROMO: UPDATE

In the last newsletter, in "Good Intentions, Bad Input," I told you that I'd responded to an ad from the National Arbor Day Foundation which promised to send me ten flowering trees for a \$10 membership fee. The trees offered were two each of Flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), Washington hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*), redbud (*Cercis Canadensis*), Bougainvillea goldenraintree (*Koelreuteria bipinnara*) and crabapple (*Malus Ioensis*) — all, for various reasons, unsuited to northern New Mexico where Sally and I live. I wondered if the NADF would take into account our location and send more suitable trees, and I promised to let you know what happened. Well, the trees arrived — the same ill-adapted trees listed in the ad. Ergo, I must assume that everyone who responded to the ad — no matter where in the USA they live — got the same trees. Seems even some of the "experts" don't get it!

## Lawns Facts

There are 50 million lawns, 14,500 golf courses, and 700,000 athletic fields in the US, and they consume 270 billion gallons of water every week — enough to give everyone in the world a shower four times a day. Each year, those lawns are slathered with 67 million pounds of pesticides and mowed by machines that use 580 million gallons of gasoline.

Turf is a \$45-billion-a-year industry. The University of Georgia alone has seven turf researchers studying everything from genetics and soil science to plant pathology, nutrient uptake, and insect management. An undergraduate can major in turf!

*From "A Farewell to Sprinklers," Discover Magazine, July 2003*

---

**The Native Plant Society of New Mexico**  
734 North Reymond St  
Las Cruces NM 88005  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Organization U.S. Postage PAID Permit #946 Las Cruces, NM
---

***Be sure to check your membership  
renewal date on your address label***