



NEWSLETTER

of the

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
OF NEW MEXICO

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER 2010

VOL. XXXV No. 3



A sign introduces highway travelers to the Valles Caldera National Preserve. The view is toward the east across the Valle Grande. Photo by Monique Schoustra. *Read all about it, p. 5.*

Inside This Issue

- 2 From the President ❖ 2 Welcome, New San Juan Chapter Members! ❖ 3 An NPSNM Kind of Party
3 See You in Silver City August 12–15! ❖ 3 Gila Lovers: Mark Your Calendars ❖ 4 Who's Who
at NPSNM ❖ 5 The Valles Caldera National Preserve: Plant Paradise at a Legislative Crossroads
7 Conservation Corner: New Mexico's Great Plains Grasslands ❖ 8–9 Chapter Activities & Events
10 Salt-Cedar—Foe or Friend? ❖ 12 Report: SOBEFREE 2010 ❖ 13 NPSNM Member Patrick Webber
14 *Wild at Heart*: Ernest Thompson Seton Exhibition at New Mexico History Museum ❖ 15 Membership

From the President

by Tom Antonio

I would like to urge all Society members to attend the upcoming NPSNM Annual Meeting in Silver City, "Gateway to the Gila." From Thursday to Sunday, August 12–15, you will have the opportunity to hear excellent presentations, attend interesting workshops, and travel with experts to unique habitats to view incredible native plants. There is still time to register for the conference and the cost is extremely reasonable, especially when you consider the many activities being offered. I attended my first conference in Los Alamos in 2002 and have thoroughly enjoyed every meeting. In addition to always offering amazing new information about New Mexico's diverse flora, these meetings are a wonderful place to reconnect and to meet new people from around the state, all of whom share a love of native plants. This will be my eighth consecutive year attending the meetings and I find they get better each year.

Next year the annual meeting will be held in Santa Fe.



As a member of that chapter I have particular respect for all the hard work the members of the Gila chapter have devoted to planning this conference. I urge any member of the Santa Fe chapter who wants to help with the 2011 meeting to please contact me. These meetings take a tremendous amount of effort by dedicated volunteers and all help will be appreciated.

Governor Richardson will once again designate August 21 Native Plant Day in New Mexico. I extend my thanks to Carol Johnson, who works closely with the New Mexico legislature to make this day possible. Many chapters plan activities around this day and I encourage each chapter to explore new ways to celebrate the diverse flora of New Mexico.

And finally, I want to welcome some new members from Colorado who have recently joined the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. Please see the article below. It really does point out how artificial state boundaries are, especially for plants. Hope to see you all in Silver City! ❖

Two species of the Four Corners region.
Right: Sticky gilia, *Aliciella pinnatifida*.
Far right: Osterhout's beardtongue, *Penstemon osterhoutii*.
 Photos © Al Schneider,
 USDA-NRCS PLANTS
 Database



Welcome, New San Juan Chapter Members!

The San Juan Four Corners Native Plant Society, formerly the Southwest chapter of the Colorado NPS, is now a part of the San Juan chapter of the NPSNM. They are an active group with many programs and field trips—17 this season—throughout the Four Corners region, from high-desert to high-alpine ecosystems. A couple of recent New Mexico outings involved botanizing around the base of Shiprock and in the badlands along NM Hwy 550. Al Schneider, previously Colorado NPS's webmaster, is president of the San Juan Four Corners NPS and plans to attend the August NPSNM board meeting. ❖

Much more information is on the San Juan Four Corners NPS website:
[http://swcoloradowildflowers.com/
 San%20Juan%20Four%20Corners%20Native%20Plant%20Society.htm](http://swcoloradowildflowers.com/San%20Juan%20Four%20Corners%20Native%20Plant%20Society.htm)

An NPSNM Kind of Party

by Jack Carter

As the national and state elections grow closer and there are Tea Parties and in some cases violent confrontations throughout the country, the Native Plant Society of New Mexico has plans for another type of party. This is a celebration of ecological harmony set in an atmosphere of conservation, study, and friendship. The program is directed toward better understanding the thousands of native plant species whose life cycles protect humankind and all other forms of life. This is a joyous occasion for friends with shared interests in conservation to learn from one another. Once each year the NPSNM offers this opportunity to meet in a selected location and expand our knowledge of the wonderful flora of New Mexico and join with friends old and new, share ideas, and enjoy the richness of this place we call home.

The Gila chapter has devoted considerable time and energy to planning this exciting party, not only for members of the state organization but for all friends of the native flora. By now you have all had an opportunity to look over the phenomenal program (see the April–June 2010 newsletter). Please register early so you will be certain to get your choices for those programs and field trips with limited enrollments. As always, visiting with friends is a high point for this meeting, and doing so over a cup of tea (or perhaps a glass of wine or a beer) adds to the joy of this gathering.

It was John Muir, along with Aldo Leopold and other conservationists, who believed that a better society and democracy would evolve if we conserved the natural world; protected all living things; and respected people of diverse origins, abilities, and needs. Let us again gather within the echoes of their voices, those who taught us to respect and protect the good things provided by the earth.

Martha and I will be present throughout the Board of Directors' meeting and we would like to hear your thoughts and ideas concerning the Carter Conservation Fund and other activities in which your NPS is involved. ❖

See You in Silver City August 12–15!

It's not too late to register for the state conference, August 12–15. Be sure to check out the Gila chapter's website—www.gilanps.org—for all the latest information on:

First Annual Photo Contest Hope you're taking lots of photos and sending in your name to Phoebe Lawrence at clayfulhands@yahoo.com.

Silent Auction See pictures of some of the items already donated or committed.

Speakers Read all their bios.

Registration Print out a form and send it in. ❖

Gila Lovers: Mark Your Calendars

The **Third Natural History of the Gila Symposium** will be held Oct. 14–15, 2010, on the Western New Mexico University campus in Silver City. Keynote speakers will be Exequiel Ezcurra of the University of California–Riverside, Benjamin Tuggle of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Corbin Newman of the U.S. Forest Service. At least twenty talks are scheduled, by experts including Josh Baldwin (geography), Jim Brooks (fish), Van Clothier (stream restoration), Mary Dowse (geology), Richard Felger (ethnobotany), Ed Gilbert (vascular plant database), Randy Jennings (narrow-headed garter snake), George Farmer (stream restoration), Gene Jercinovic (flora of the Floridas), Kelly Kindscher (ethnobotany), Russ Kleinman (ferns), Dave Menzie (watershed restoration), Jim O'Hara (tachinid flies), Dave Propst (fish), Roland Shook (southwestern willow flycatcher), Matt Schultz (watershed restoration), Bob Sivinski (rare plants), and Rebecca Summer (geomorphology). This event is geared toward a broad audience including the general public, students, scientists, and natural resource managers. For more information, please visit www.gilasymposium.org. ❖

BOOKS NEW • ALMOST NEW • USED

from personal library

**Biology • Botany • Conservation
Education • Environment • Evolution
Natural History • Philosophy • Science**



Proceeds will support research and education via the Jack & Martha Carter Conservation Fund of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico

www.mimbrespublishing.com

jmcarter01@hughes.net

LONE MOUNTAIN NATIVES

Mark & Tricia

Plant Growers & Consultants



Cacti, shrubs, trees,
wildflowers & seeds
for landscape restoration

575-538-4345

lonemtn@q.com

By appointment or visit us in downtown Silver City Fridays & Saturdays.

The Newsletter of the NPSNM

July–September 2010. Vol. 35 No. 3. This newsletter is published quarterly by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico (PO Box 35388, Albuquerque, NM 87176) and is free to members. The NPSNM, a nonprofit organization, 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.

Next deadline is September 1, 2010. Articles and high-resolution artwork are enthusiastically welcomed and can be submitted to the editor, Sarah Johnson, at sarita@wildblue.net.

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

Board of Directors

President Tom Antonio tom@thomasantonio.org 505/690-5105
Vice-President Renée West keywestern@hotmail.com 575/885-3636
Recording Secretary Pam McBride ebotpam@msn.com 505/343-9472
Membership Secretary Lolly Jones ljones20@comcast.net 505/771-8020
Treasurer Steve Robertson bsrob4@msn.com 575/751-9592

At-Large Directors

Albuquerque Frances Robertson frobertson45@comcast.net 505/828-4775
El Paso Jack Makepeace jmakepeace@elp.rr.com 915/585-2149
Gila Charles Holmes iskander321@hotmail.com 575/388-1371
Las Cruces John White jmwhite@utep.edu 575/522-6763
Otero Hildy Reiser hildyranger@msn.com 575/439-5196
San Juan Les Lundquist Dalunk54@yahoo.com 505/326-7194
Santa Fe Carol Johnson gjohnson@comcast.net 505/466-1303
Taos Judy Lister glister@newmex.com 575/776-1183


Chapter Presidents

Albuquerque Frances Robertson frobertson45@comcast.net 505/828-4775
El Paso Cheryl Garing cherylgaring@yahoo.com
Gila Elroy Limmer elroylimmer@gmail.com 575/538-5513
Las Cruces Carolyn Gressitt canton49@hotmail.com 575/523-8413
Otero Helgi Osterreich hkasak@netmdc.com 575/585-3315
San Juan Les Lundquist Dalunk54@yahoo.com 505/326-7194
Santa Fe Tom Antonio tom@thomasantonio.org 505/690-5105
Taos Nora Patterson eeppatt@gmail.com 575/776-2833

Committee Chairs

Book Sales Lisa Alvares nativeplantsociety@yahoo.com 505/220-9880
Conservation Jim Nellessen jpnellessen@peoplepc.com 505/867-7905
Finance Wynn Anderson wanderson@utep.edu 915/433-6072
NMDOT Lori Walton Lori.Walton@state.nm.us
Newsletter Editor Sarah Johnson sarita@wildblue.net
Poster Sales Gary Runyan gary.runyan@state.nm.us 505/205-9953
Website Editor Jane Mygatt jmygatt@unm.edu

Bernardo Beach

 Native and climate-adapted plants
 for beautiful easy-care gardens that attract
 songbirds, hummingbirds, and butterflies

From Our Backyard to Yours

Farm open the first weekend of each month
 April through September, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 Plants also for sale at Plants of the Southwest in Albuquerque
 in Veguita, NM call for directions

505*345*6248



LOCALLY GROWN PERENNIALS, SHRUBS,
 TREES, & SEASONAL VEGETABLES

IN BERNALILLO

RETAIL 157 Jemez Dam Road ▪ 505/867-1322

WHOLESALE 2 Dove Road ▪ 505/867-1323

The Valles Caldera National Preserve: Plant Paradise at a Legislative Crossroads

by Tom Ribe, Executive Director, Caldera Action

The 89,000-acre Valles Caldera National Preserve in central-northern New Mexico holds great potential for native plant protection and restoration in rare environments. A three-year campaign by conservationists has this formerly private ranch close to being transferred to the National Park Service for permanent protection.

The Valles Caldera is a circle of 11,200-foot mountains surrounding vast valleys full of grass and wildlife, hot springs, and clear creeks. Its rim mountains are cloaked in fir, aspen, pine, and spruce. The Valles Caldera stands at the center of the Pueblo Indian world of the Southwest, with many living Pueblo communities a short drive from its flanks and the great "Anasazi" (ancestral pueblo) ruins at Bandelier National Monument, Chaco Canyon National Historic Park, and various state parks nearby.

The Valles Caldera's expansive, wild beauty belies its rough past, in which sheep ranchers grazed its valleys nearly to dust during the Depression and loggers spiraled many of the

mountains with logging roads until the 1970s. Hispanos from centuries-old villages to its immediate north ventured into the Caldera warily before the American army drove Apache and Navajo raiders from its forests in the 1860s.

The Valles Caldera is a huge, now-dormant field of volcanoes that erupted between one and twenty million years ago, creating a spectacular and well-preserved complex of landscape features. The Pajarito Plateau (where the National Park Service's Bandelier National Monument lies immediately east of the Valles Caldera) reveals orange and pink volcanic cliffs, which repeatedly drew the interest of national park planners starting in the first decade of the twentieth century. Much of the high Jemez Mountains, formed by massive, volcanic ash-spewing eruptions, are contained within the Valles Caldera National Preserve; many geologists have called for the VCNP to be declared a World Heritage Site.

The Valles Caldera offers the National Park Service a chance to interpret this rich history and extraordinary volcanism for the hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to Bandelier National Monument and to nearby Santa Fe, which is one of the most important tourist destinations in the United States. Conservationists see its livestock-worn landscape and numerous old logging roads as a prime place for the National Park Service to lead environmental restoration programs, which would employ young people from nearby low-income areas while helping establish a stronger land ethic in the area.

In 2000 the VCNP was purchased by the federal government amid a political battle between those who felt New Mexico had too much public land already and many others who saw the exceptional beauty of the Valles Caldera threatened by continued private ownership, ranching, and real estate development. As a compromise, the Preserve, rather than



Rocky slope lined with aspen and mixed conifer on the east side of the Valle Grande in the Valles Caldera National Preserve. The view is over the largest of the calderas at the VCNP.

Photo by Tom Ribe

being set up under an agency like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Park Service, was set up under a "trust," created to manage it as a "government corporation" (like the Post Office) overseen by a board of term-limited, politically appointed private-sector trustees. These nine trustees have been reinventing public-land management in largely closed meetings as they struggle under a mandate to become "financially self-sufficient" by 2015. No other piece of wild western land has this structure and few people believe it works, least of all the trustees themselves.

With little public resistance, conservationists led by a group called Caldera Action have pressed New Mexico's congressional delegation to introduce legislation closing the VCNP Trust and to transfer the Valles Caldera to the National Park Service as a Preserve (like Mojave or Big Thicket)

Continued page 6

Valles Caldera National Preserve (continued from p. 5)

where hunting and fishing would continue but National Park standards would apply. It would be the 19th National Preserve managed by the NPS.

The VCNP has a variety of habitat types and some rare habitats for native plants. The calderas in the VCNP are cold meadow areas, while extensive virgin mixed-conifer forests on the west-facing slopes hold pristine habitat for orchids and other forest dwellers. Alamo Bog, a rare high-altitude wetland, has proven critical for fire history studies and is home to the rare "bog birch" (*Betula pumila*).

Montane bunch grasslands in the upper elevations of the VCNP have been largely protected from grazing and could enjoy fire reintroduction with the NPS to stop tree encroachment and strengthen this rare bunchgrass habitat.

The large elk population that inhabits the VCNP has exerted strong pressure on browse species, greatly reducing aspen recruitment and other broadleaf woody species. Conservationists hope that reduced or eliminated livestock grazing and a more focused ecological restoration program under the NPS, including prescribed fire, could boost struggling woody shrubs and invigorate grasslands.

The National Park Service has a long history of ecological restoration, and their interest in scientifically based management should offer native plant enthusiasts a chance to advocate for specific native plants, threatened or not, as the NPS draws up its general management plan for the Preserve should a bill to transfer it to the NPS succeed soon.

The VCNP will offer an accessible and extraordinary range of habitats for public enjoyment, while allowing the public to participate in long-term habitat restoration in this northern New Mexico treasure. ❖



Round Mountain in the VCNP. This is a resurgent dome feature above the Valle Grande with part of the Jemez elk herd visible in the foreground.

Photo by Monique Schoustra

On May 27, 2010, in a historic action, Senators Bingaman and Udall introduced legislation (S.3452) to transfer Valles Caldera to the National Park Service. The citizens group Caldera Action thanks the Native Plant Society of New Mexico for its support in this move.

Take action:

E-mail Senators Bingaman (<http://bingaman.senate.gov/>) and Udall (<http://udall.senate.gov/>) thanking them for introducing the bill.



Enchanted GARDENS LLC
For the Finest Garden Products

270 Avenida de Mesilla • Las Cruces
575•524•1886
Gardens@zianet.com
www.nmenchantedgardens.com

Widest selection of native plants in Southern New Mexico!

**Native flowers, shrubs, & trees
Herbs & perennials
Bird & hummingbird feeders
Teas, teapots, & gifts**



(505) 321.7629

R Scott Carlson & Associates
Landscapes of the Urban Understory



R Scott Carlson
ISA Certificate # RM-2498A

rsc33@unm.edu

CONSERVATION CORNER

New Mexico's Great Plains Grasslands

by Jim Nellesen, NPSNM Conservation Committee Chair

Recently I spent five intimate days with the short-grass prairie of eastern New Mexico in the vicinity of Clovis. By intimate I mean I walked somewhere between 50 and 60 miles of prairie rangeland with mostly the sky, the wind, and the species of the prairie for companions. Many of us lovers of the wild outdoors hike in the mountains, their foothills, and the desert, but how many of us deliberately hike the prairie? I have hiked the prairie before, but never so much at once. The lands that I walked are owned by the New Mexico State Land Office (NMSLO) and leased to ranchers. Yes, there were some livestock, but there were also pronghorn, black-tailed prairie dogs, burrowing owls, pocket gophers, horned lizards, jackrabbits, coyotes, meadow larks, horned larks, and long-billed curlews, to name a few.

What of the plants? After all, those are of prime interest for us lovers of the native flora. In late May after a wet winter there were plenty blooming. In the white-flowered category there were stemless evening primrose (*Oenothera caespitosa*), ash-gray blackfoot daisy (*Melampodium leucanthum*), a few species of daisy fleabane (*Erigeron*), and baby aster (*Chaetopappa ericoides*). In the yellow group there were Engelmann's daisy (*Engelmannia pinnatifida*), lyre-leaved green eyes (*Berlandiera lyrata*), puccoon (*Lithospermum*



Orange bowls, *Linum rigidum*

incisum), green-flowered hedgehog (*Echinocereus viridiflorus*), sundrops (*Calylophus serrulatus*), and James' dalea (*Dalea jamesii*). In the blue/purple/violet category there were Fendler's penstemon (*Penstemon fendleri*), James' penstemon (*P. jamesii*), a few species of milkvetch (*Astragalus*), and locoweed (*Oxytropis lambertii*). In the orange/red/pink category were scarlet globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*), orange bowls (*Linum rigidum*), and plains paintbrush (*Castilleja sessiliflora*). I have only named a few of the more common species that were blooming.

What about the grasses? This prairie had blue and hairy grama (*Bouteloua gracilis* and *B. hirsuta*), side-oats grama (*B. curtipendula*), galleta (*Pleuraphis jamesii*), western wheatgrass (*Elymus smithii*), needle-and-thread grass (*Stipa comata*), several three-awn grass species (*Aristida*), sand bluestem (*Andropogon hallii*) in certain locations, and lots of buffalo grass (*Buchloe dactyloides*). In my opinion, these prairies are being managed well by the NMSLO and the lessees, and were not overgrazed.

Continued page 14



Pronghorn on the wide-open prairie

Chapter Activities & Events

For further information on the following events, notify the contact person listed, or visit the chapter's Web page: first go to <http://npsnm.unm.edu>; click on Local Chapters;

Albuquerque

All scheduled monthly meetings are first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. in the NM Museum of Natural History, 1801 Mountain Rd. NW. For more info contact Frances Robertson, frobertson45@comcast.net, 505-828-4775, or Jim McGrath, sedges@swcp.com, 286-8745. For meeting places indicated [A] through [H] see website.

July No monthly meeting.

Jul 16 Friday Field Forum. South Crest Trail from Sandia Crest Visitor Center. George Miller, leader. Meet 9:00 a.m. at [A].

Jul 30–Aug 1 Overnight Rare Plant Field Trip. Jim McGrath, leader (286-8745 or sedges@swcp.com). We will conduct a field survey for the rarest plant in New Mexico—*Phacelia cloudcroftensis*—along roadsides and in canyon bottoms on the west side of the Sacramento Mountains. Contact Jim McGrath by July 16 to sign up and get additional information. Prior to the trip we will schedule a UNM herbarium visit to examine specimens of the target and related species. *Note:* Field trip dates may be changed depending on onset of summer rains.

August No monthly meeting.

Aug 27 Friday Field Forum. Albuquerque Volcanoes. Gary Runyan, leader (205-9953). Meet 9:00 a.m. at [B].

Aug 28 “The Thistle Patrol”—Invasive Plant Removal Field Trip, Valles Caldera National Preserve. Lisa Driscoll, leader (zaradric@yahoo.com; 505-266-6404). Meet 7:30 a.m. at [G] to carpool to the Caldera. High-clearance vehicles appreciated. Bring sun and rain protection, water, lunch, shovels if available. Return to Albuquerque by 5 p.m.

Sep 1 Meeting. Chihuahuan Desert Shrubs: Bosque del Apache and Quebradas Hills. Naturalist Bob Merkel explains that shrub identification in the desert is not that difficult.

Sep 11 Field Trip. Field Trip. Manzano Mountains. Dr. Tim Lowrey, UNM Professor of Biology, leader. Joint field trip with students from Dr. Lowrey's “Flora of New Mexico” class at UNM. Details TBA.

Sep 18 Field Trip. Wildflowers at Whitfield Wildlife Conservation Area (1 mile N of Belen). Don Heinze, leader. Meet Don 9:00 a.m. at [H]. Carpoolers meet 8:00 a.m. at [B].

Sep 25 Field Trip. Arroyo de las Canas in the Quebradas: Desert Hills, Gypsophiles and the Arroyo Bottom. Bob Merkel, leader. Meet 7:45 a.m. at [G] to leave by 8:00.

then select the chapter. **Hikers** should always bring plenty of water, hat, sun protection, lunch and/or snacks, field guides, and wear sturdy shoes, suitable for rough, uneven ground.

Participants will meet Bob at 9:30 a.m. in the parking area on the south side of US 380 just east of I-25 exit 139 (just west of San Antonio). Bring lunch. High-clearance vehicles recommended.

El Paso

All programs are second Thursdays at 7 p.m. at El Paso Garden Center, 3105 Grant Ave. All society events are free unless otherwise noted. Nonmembers are always welcome. Info: elpasovlm@sbcglobal.net or jimhastings@elp.rr.com, or call 915/240-7414.

Jul 8 Talk. Medicinal Plants of the Chihuahuan Desert. Mary O'Connell, PhD, Regents Professor, Plant and Environmental Sciences, NMSU.

Aug 12 Talk. How Native Americans Used Native Plants. Keith Rihn, TX AgriLife Extension Service Master Naturalist.

Sep 9 Talk. September is for Planting Bullet-Proof Native Plants. Cheryl Garing, horticulturist.

Gila (Silver City)

All programs and hikes are free and open to the public. Meetings are third Fridays at 7 p.m. at WNMU's Harlan Hall. Hikers meet at 8 a.m. in south parking lot of WNMU Fine Arts Theatre the morning of the hike to arrange carpooling. Participants must sign a release-of-liability form at that time, and will receive a list of native plants in the hiking area. For more info, call Deming Gustafson, 575/388-5192. Destinations may be changed due to weather. Activity updates posted on www.gilanps.org.

Jul 18 Hike. Sheep Corral and the riparian area to the north of the corral, to look for wild potatoes.

Sep 12 Field Trip. Tour of Ft. Bayard. Richard Felger will talk about his work with the trees in the area.

Las Cruces

Meetings and programs are Wednesdays at 7 p.m. in the conference room of the Social Center at the University Terrace Good Samaritan Village, 3011 Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces. (On the right, while traveling east on Buena Vida from Telshor.) Field trips are Saturdays; most last into the afternoon. Participants must sign a release-of-liability form. Children must be accompanied by their parents. Programs

and field trips are free; nonmembers always welcome. Contacts: Carolyn Gressitt, 575/523-8413; Al Krueger, 575/532-1036.

Jul 14 Talk. Botany in a Buick: Identifying Grasses at 50 mph. Kelly Allred.

Jul 17 Walk. Soledad Canyon. Kelly Allred, leader. Meet 8:00 a.m. at east end of Rio Grande Bank parking lot, corner University and Telshor.

Sep 8 Talk. Water-Stained Landscapes. Landscape artist and author Joan Woodward.

Sep 11 Walk. Oliver Lee State Park/Dog Canyon, where water creates a unique oasis. Meet 8:00 a.m. at east parking lot of K-Mart on Hwy 70.

Otero (Alamogordo)

For field trip information, contact William Herndon, laluzlobo@gmail.com, 575/437-2555; Eric Metzler, metzler@msu.edu, 575/443-6250; or Helgi Osterreich, hkasak@netmdc.com, 575/585-3315. More info should be available by the beginning of each month.

Jul 24 Field trip. Holcomb Ranch (near Timberon). Meet 9:00 a.m. at Hwy 82/N. Florida and arrive in Timberon at the old lodge parking lot at 10:30 to meet with Judy Mederes for a tour of the Holcomb Ranch. Bring lunch.

Aug 11-14 Otero County Fair. We will have a booth as usual. Please contact any of the above if you can help.

Aug 21 Field trip. Atkinson Canyon, near Sunspot. Meet 9:00 a.m. at Hwy 82/N. Florida. Bring lunch.

Sep 18 Field trip. Bent, Styve Homnick's back 40. Meet 9:00 a.m. at the Y in Tularosa. Bring lunch.

San Juan (Farmington)

Meetings are third Thursdays at 7 p.m. at San Juan Community College. For more info, contact Les Lundquist at 505/334-8634 or Dalunk54@yahoo.com.

Santa Fe

Meetings are third Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. at the meeting room of the REI store, 500 Market Ave. For more information, contact Tom Antonio, tom@thomasantonio.org, 505/690-5105; or Carol Johnson, gcjohnson@comcast.net, 505/466-1303.

Jul 3 Field Trip. Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve Ethnobotany Walk. Nancy Daniel, leader. 10:00 a.m. Directions at www.santafebotanicalgarden.org.

Jul 24 Field Trip. East Placitas Open Space. Jeremy McClain, leader (348-7622). Meet 8:30 a.m. to carpool at K-Mart parking lot on St. Michaels Dr.

Aug 1 Field Trip. Chicoma Peak. Chick Keller, leader (662-

3993). Meet 9:00 a.m. to carpool at K-Mart parking lot on St. Michaels Dr.

Aug 7 Field Trip. Leonora Curtin Wetland Preserve Plant Walk: "No Plant Is an Island." Nancy Daniel, leader. 10:00 a.m. Directions at www.santafebotanicalgarden.org.

Sep 11 Field Trip. Blue Hole Cienega (Santa Rosa). Bob Sivinski, leader (577-0287). Meet 9:00 a.m. to carpool at K-Mart parking lot on St. Michaels Dr. Bring Golden Age Passport and/or State Parks Pass if you have them so we can use facilities.

Taos

Meetings are first Tuesdays at 7 p.m. at the Kit Carson Electric Co-op Conference Room, 118 Cruz Alta Rd. Check Web link for this chapter to get updates. Chapter members will get e-mail or USPS mail notification.

Jul 6 Talk. The Basics of Garden Design. Rey Torres, Taos County Extension Agent.

Jul 10 Workshop. Rocky Mountain Lichens. Pat Webber and David Witt, leaders. 10:00 a.m.–noon, Conference Room at Taos County Agricultural Center. Contact: Pat Webber, webber@msu.edu.

Jul 11 Field Trip. Subalpine Flora: Serpent Lake or below Gold Hill. Trip will last until 3 p.m. Contact: Pat Webber, webber@msu.edu.

Jul 17 Plant Sale at Taos Farmers Market. Contact: Chris Miller, joe_and_chris@msn.com, 737-9255.

Jul 18 or 25 Hike. Middle Fork, Red River. 4WD necessary. Contact: Pat Konrad, pkonrad@taosnet.com.

Jul 24 Workshop. Grassland and Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands Restoration. Tony Benson (benson1@newmex.com).

Aug 3 Talk. Biodiversity of the Taos-Area Ecosystems. Sylvia Rains Dennis, Professor, UNM.

Aug 4 Field Trip. Aldo Leopold House. Benjamin Romero, guide; Betsy Robertson, leader (bsrob@msn.com).

Sep 7 Talk. Native Peoples' Uses of Plants. Del Orr.

Serving our community since 1986



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

623 Paseo del Pueblo N. www.cidsfoodmarket.com 758•1148

PROFILES OF THE IGNORED ENEMY

Salt-Cedar—Foe or Friend?

by Donald H. Heinze, NPSNM representative to the state Noxious Weed Advisory Committee

I was astounded. Dr. Edward Glenn, of the University of Arizona in Tucson, was talking heresy. He was saying that salt-cedar (*Tamarix* spp.) was not all that bad. After his presentation at the NPSNM annual meeting at Taos in August 2009, I asked him directly, "Should salt-cedar be considered a noxious weed?" He said no.* That floored me. For the past 47 years, I had been programmed to consider all phreatophytes, even willows, as thirsty thieves that sucked the ground dry of water. And salt-cedar was the worst!

There is considerable disagreement among experts about salt-cedar. There is even disagreement regarding its species. The salt-cedar that we have in New Mexico may be a hybrid that mixes as many as four species, including *Tamarix chinensis* Lour., *T. pendantra* Pall., *T. parviflora* DC., *T. ramosissima* Ledeb., and possibly others. Or it may be a single species that is synonymous to (the same as) one or more other species. I cop out and call it "*Tamarix* spp."

After eight months of searching scientific literature, picking brains, and an environmental forum on salt-cedar arranged by the energetic efforts of my good friend James McGrath, I have concluded: (1) salt-cedar is not as big a water waster as its reputation says; (2) revegetation after control efforts is an absolute necessity; (3) removing it just to increase available water is uneconomical when the cost of revegetation is considered; (4) passerine birds use it extensively; (5) it is an excellent soil-holding plant; (6) it is very flammable and forms a "fire (vegetation) type"; (7) using large amounts of herbicide on it (or any other vegetation) is a highly questionable practice; (8) clearing large areas of it is inadvisable; (9) salt-laden leaves fall to the ground and decompose; (10) it should remain on the noxious list so funds will be allocated to control it; (11) consideration should be given to removing new infestations as soon as possible; (12) experts disagree regarding the salt-cedar beetle (*Diorhabda elongata*); (13) before control efforts are initiated, it is essential that the land manager create a plan of operation; (14) when management decisions regarding it are made, prior prejudices should not enter into these decisions; and (15) we can never completely get rid of it.

1. Salt-cedar's water use varies on a case-by-case basis due to a long list of ecological circumstances. I suspect that it uses a similar volume of water as an equal live biomass of native vegetation (i.e., cottonwoods [*Populus* spp.]

and/or willows [*Salix* spp.]) under the same ecological conditions.

2. "Nature abhors a vacuum." If we remove the vegetation cover of salt-cedar (or any other plant), nature will attempt to revegetate it as fast as possible before the soil erodes. The question being: "Is the vegetation that comes back naturally what we want?" In all probability it is not. The plants that replace salt-cedar will probably be undesirable weeds. These may be kochia (*Kochia scoparia* L.), Russian thistle (*Salsola tragus* L.), Ravenna grass[†] (*Saccharum ravennae* [L.] L.), Russian olive[†] (*Elaeagnus angustifolia* L.), perennial pepperweed[†] (*Lepidium latifolium*), Siberian elm[†] (*Ulmus pumila* L.), or salt-cedar again. Or native species that do not have the structure to be passerine bird habitat, such as saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*) and scratchgrass (*Muhlenbergia asperifolia*), may revegetate. Therefore, desirable species, preferably natives, must be planted.
3. Recent studies using the latest technology have indicated that streamflow is not increased at all by salt-cedar eradication, and the value of groundwater gained is much less than the cost of clearing and rehabilitating the site.
4. Forty-nine species of passerine birds, including the federally listed as Endangered willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*) and the candidate for federal listing, the yellowbilled cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*), have been documented using salt-cedar for perching and nesting.
5. If the land manager wants to prevent the silting up of a reservoir, salt-cedar is precisely the plant to do it. Its extensive, deep root system is an unexcelled soil holder and erosion stopper.
6. Salt-cedar is a serious fire hazard, especially when it forms a monocultural "fire type." It ignites easily and burns at a hotter temperature than most native vegetation. The above-ground parts of the plant will be destroyed, but it has huge root boles that will sprout vigorously. Thus fire will rejuvenate a senescent stand of salt-cedar. It may introduce fire to the bosque, which is not a fire type; its vegetation is killed by fire. Salt-cedar will also act like a "ladder" for a fire, allowing it to climb up from the ground to the arboreal crown of the trees. Its high heat when burning may even kill the insect eggs

*Dr. Glenn has since revised his opinion.

[†]Noxious weeds

- and larvae that some passerine birds depend on for food.
7. The whys and wherefores of using agricultural chemicals is a barrel of snakes that I have neither the space nor the desire to get into. Suffice to say that no fewer than 195 different herbicide formulations[‡] that are effective on salt-cedar are registered for use in New Mexico in 2010. More than 11,500 acres of tamarisk were sprayed along the Pecos River in 2002–2004. Introducing this much herbicide into the environment, no matter how carefully done, is not asking for trouble. It is begging for trouble. At the very least, denuding that much land is destroying a great deal of avian habitat and watershed cover. Fortunately, few people advocate large spray projects anymore.
 8. If any means of clearing is done (chemical, mechanical, or biological), it should be done in a mosaic of small patches. This will have a minimal effect on avian habitat and watershed. If herbicides are used, a relatively small amount of chemical material will be necessary. Mechanical salt-cedar removal of the large boles will traumatize the surface of the ground. So smaller treatments mean less environmental disturbance.
 9. Salt-cedar takes up salts with its formidable root system and translocates them to its leaves. When these leaves die and fall to the ground, they will increase soil salinity and make it unsuited to several native species.
 10. One of the primary purposes of a noxious weed list is to flag certain species for allocation of management funds by the state and federal governments.
 11. Salt-cedar is expanding its range. As with all plants, initial establishments are small and easily eliminated. Under some circumstances, however, salt-cedar might actually be wanted. For instance, it may provide bird nesting and perching structure in areas where no such structure was previously available. This is because native woody plants could not survive there. A good example of this is along the banks of the Rio Puerco in Socorro County.
 12. “The jury is still out” on the beetle. It may or may not be the answer to the salt-cedar problem. Despite reports that New Mexico summer days are too short for the salt-cedar beetle to complete its metamorphosis, southern biotypes of it are adapted to New Mexico. Unfortunately, most beetle defoliation occurs in June and July, when passerine birds are nesting. After that, there is a flush of tamarix growth. There is also fear that the beetle itself may become a problem.
 13. The initial step to managing salt-cedar (or any other plant, for that matter) must be formulating a plan that tells: (a) the scope of the management action; (b) the objective(s) of the management action (probably combinations of avian habitat improvement, aesthetics, fire hazard reduction, groundwater increase); (c) the reason for the action; (d) the method(s) of salt-cedar removal and money allocated to it; and (e) the revegetation methodology and funding allocated to it. A pitfall that must be avoided is spending too much of the funding on removal, and not having enough left for revegetation. This step is necessary, unless we want the delightful herbs and shrubs mentioned in point #2!
 14. Salt-cedar’s past reputation is based on invalid research, hearsay, and pure prejudice. It should be placed in its proper place, the trash, before any management decisions regarding this species are made.
 15. We are never going to get rid of salt-cedar. There is simply too much of it, too much seed has been deposited in the ground, and it is too widespread. Therefore, we had better learn to live with it!

The bottom line is: “What is wanted/needed from a given tract of riparian or lacustrine land?” If it is preventing erosion (e.g., to stop the silting of a reservoir), or providing structural habitat for birds, tamarisk might be just the thing! If we want to have a bosque that provides optimum habitat for native animals from insects to eagles, and aesthetic values for people, attempts to control it in a careful, methodical manner should be undertaken. ❖

Grateful acknowledgement for help on this article must go to Mr. James McGrath, contract botanist; Dr. Edward Glenn; Dr. Jill Schroeder and Dr. David Thompson, both of NM State Univ.; Dr. Anna Shir, Univ. of Denver; Ms. Gina Dello Russo, Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Refuge ecologist; Ms. Nyleen Stowe, Director of Special Projects, Socorro Soil and Water Conservation District; Mr. Matt Schmander, Superintendent of Albuquerque Open Space; Dr. Kelly Allred, NM State Univ.; and Ms. Irene Wanner, proofreader par excellence.

Agua Fria Nursery Specializing in Native Plants



In Santa Fe

1409 Agua Fria

505-983-4831

fax 983-3593

aguafrianr@aol.com

[‡]Many of these herbicides have the same active ingredients.

Report: SOBEFREE 2010

by Russ Kleinman, Gila Chapter

SOBEFREE is the annual three-day moss workshop and wilderness foray organized by the University of California–Berkeley and founded by Dr. Brent Mishler. Participants are a combination of North America's leading bryologists,

Masters and PhD candidates in leading labs, and even beginners. Everyone with an interest in mosses is invited.

Each year SOBEFREE travels to a different location in the U.S., selected for the diversity of mosses available, suitable accommodations, with consideration given to expense, and the likelihood of finding interesting material that is not covered in snow during Spring Break, when the meeting is traditionally held. This year, SOBEFREE was held at the Sacramento Methodist Assembly in the Sacramento Mountains. The workshop was supported by the NPSNM and attended by several members.

Coorganizers of this year's meeting were Dr. Brent Mishler and Dr. Kelly Allred. About forty people attended and were treated to wonderful guest accommodations and a tremendous diversity of mosses at both upper and lower elevations in the Sacramentos, about 26 miles south of Cloudcroft.

The meetings begin with all-day forays into the wilderness looking for moss specimens. Locations are chosen such that strenuous hiking is not required. A wide assortment of moss genera is ensured by careful planning ahead of time.

After collecting during the day, the evening sessions consist of keying out the collections, student presentations, and general comraderie and discussion. This year, dozens of different moss species were identified, including several potential new state records. We are already looking forward to SOBEFREE 2011, which will be held in Northern California. Stay tuned! ❖

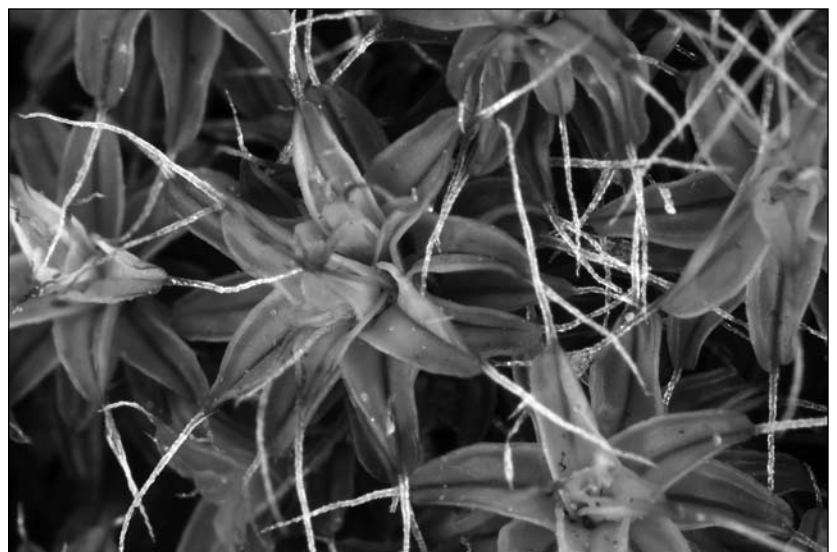


Dr. Kelly Allred examines a moss.

Photos by Russ Kleinman



Workshop site.



***Syntrichia ruralis*. The leaves are only 2–3 mm long and have a hair-point on the end. They are a bright green with a reddish midvein (costa) when wet, but are quite dull when dry. They are common in the Silver City area.**

NPSNM Member Patrick Webber in the News

NPSNM Taos chapter member Patrick Webber has been awarded the 2010 Medal by the International Arctic Science Committee "in recognition of his exceptional and sustained contributions to the understanding of the Arctic." The award ceremony takes place at The International Polar Year Oslo Science Conference in Oslo, Norway, on June 9. This is a major conference, for both arctic and Antarctic scientists, and about 6,000 are expected to attend.

Pat is being recognized for "his life-time scientific contributions to arctic and alpine tundra ecology, his leadership in developing and participating in several sustainable national and international research projects (e.g., ITEX, MAB, LTER), the planning and implementation of the International Polar Year and the project 'Back to the Future,' and his mentorship of the next generation of plant ecologists."

Pat describes his work this way:

I am a Professor Emeritus at Michigan State University. Although I retired in 2005 and now live in New Mexico I maintain my interest in cold regions natural science. My research and teaching interests are broad. My early training was in classical phytosociology and plant taxonomy. For my doctoral work I explored factor analysis methods, and later my students and I were among the first to make multi-layered maps using Geographic Information Systems techniques. We pioneered a mapping method that has become a standard required by regulatory agencies in planning prior to resource development. My current research concerns global change in the widest sense and includes land-use change and climate change. I am investigating the synergism between surface disturbance and climate warming in tundra landscapes.

I have directed several large research projects, for example the San Juan Ecology Project, the U.S.

Alpine Program of the International Tundra Biome Programme, and I was the founding Principal Investigator of the Alpine Long-Term Ecological Research program of NSF. I have also been director of two large university research institutions and I directed the Arctic System Science Program at NSF. This program is one of the largest programs in the U.S. Global Change Research Program. I have helped plan and direct many international science programs such as the International Biological Programme and the International Tundra Experiment of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme. I am former president of the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC). My present principal goal is to facilitate others in their pursuit of arctic research.

This award is an extraordinary honor—as one Taos chapter member put it, it's like the Nobel Prize for the Arctic. Pat leads numerous field trips for the Taos chapter, so opportunities abound to congratulate him in person. ❖



**WATER WISE
LANDSCAPES
INCORPORATED**

www.waterwiselandscapesnm.com

DESIGN  INSTALLATION  IRRIGATION

MAINTENANCE OF NATIVE, DROUGHT TOLERANT PLANTS

CONTRACTOR'S LIC. #59714 505-344-7508 Hunter Ten Broeck

DRIP IRRIGATION



DripWorks.com **FREE CATALOG**

800.522.3747

Watch our HOW-TO Videos and see how easy it is!

- ◆ High Quality Products
- ◆ Best Selection
- ◆ Easy to Assemble Kits
- ◆ Save Water and Money



DripWorks.com

Gardens, Landscape & Farms

Get serious about saving water

ORDER ONLINE

- Fast shipping to New Mexico
- **FREE** Design Service
- Technical Help Online or by Phone



Custom Cut Pond Liners • Pond Care
everliner.com

Wild at Heart: Ernest Thompson Seton Exhibition at New Mexico History Museum

by David L. Witt, Taos Chapter

At the end of April, two of New Mexico's leading botanists, DeWitt Ivy and Roger Peterson, accompanied me on a tour of the hillside around Seton Castle, twenty minutes south-east of downtown Santa Fe. While looking at plants including Beakpod milkvetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus*) and Dakota vervain (*Glandularia bipinnatifida*), DeWitt told me that he had discovered the drawings of Ernest Thompson Seton while in high school.

Seton (1860–1946), one of the most famous naturalists of the early twentieth century, hoped to inspire young naturalists and artists. One of those turned out to be DeWitt. As we looked through DeWitt's *Flowering Plants of New Mexico* (5th edition), I thought that Seton would have been pleased to have us botanizing on the property where he spent the last sixteen years of his life.

Seton is the subject of a major exhibition and accompanying book (*Ernest Thompson Seton: The Life and Legacy of an Artist and Conservationist*, Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2010) that I put together for the Academy for the Love of Learning, the owner of Seton Castle. The show opened at the New Mexico History Museum on May 22–23 with 3500 people showing up to see how Seton changed our perceptions of nature.

Coming to New Mexico in October 1893 as a wolf hunter, Seton left in February 1894 as a man on his way to becoming their protector, one of the greatest publicists for wildlife conservation. His story “Lobo, King of Currumpaw” tells of a cattle-eating wolf Seton pursued and ultimately caught. The exhibition at the New Mexico History Museum begins with this story of how the wolf changed Seton.

A few years later, Seton promoted ideas for outdoor youth recreation, laying foundations for the worldwide Boy

Scout movement. He edited the first Boy Scouts of America manual and, in 1913, a second one, *The Book of Woodcraft*, which covered many aspects of outdoor living, including sections on plants.

Seton grew up in the 1860s and 1870s on the western frontier of Ontario, where the folklore of “wildwood remedies” for first aid and general wellness was a part of everyday life. As a young man, he studied all aspects of nature with Canadian First Nations peoples. Undoubtedly, the use of medicinal plants was a part of this training. Seton was passionate about trees and included a long section on the eastern woodlands in *The Book of Woodcraft*.

Displayed in the exhibition is a drawing of a man at the edge of a forest. A squirrel perches on his foot. The man holds a large sword with both hands, ready to make a downward strike. The squirrel represents nature—in its nut planting, it ensures the continuous regeneration of nature. Will the man kill the squirrel? If so, at what cost? Seton published his first version of this image in 1901, establishing foundations of today's environmentalism.

Artwork, artifacts, and historic photos from the extraordinary life of Ernest Thompson Seton will remain on display at the New Mexico History Museum through May 8, 2011. Admission: \$6 NM residents; \$9 others. Free to NM residents with ID on Sundays and NM seniors 60 and older with ID on Wednesdays. Free to everyone 5–8 p.m. Fridays. Information: 505/476-5200 or visit <http://www.nmhistorymuseum.org>. *Wild at Heart* is presented with special support from the Academy for the Love of Learning, an institute for transformative learning, and home of the Seton Legacy Project. ❖

Remember ~ August 21 is New Mexico Native Plant Day!

New Mexico's Great Plains Grasslands (continued from p. 7)

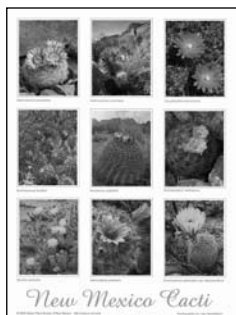
The nonnative species were largely absent. These lands appeared to be in a healthy, well-managed condition.

My point is this: We often think about saving and conserving our mountain habitats, our desert habitats, our wetlands and riparian corridors, but let us also be reminded of our grasslands and continue to conserve them as well. Some are set aside as preserves, but many are also directly utilized by us. This does not mean that we cannot conserve them,

because we can. What I saw was an example of that conservation. Let us keep it up!

Never think of the prairie as a boring continuum of grass and treeless horizons! I felt the beauty and strength of that prairie during those five days and 60 miles. The grass, the wildflowers, the scattered shrubs, the sky, the clouds, and the wind all spoke to me. Yes, even the wind! We should not curse the wind, for it is part of the environment and it spoke to me on my intimate walk in the prairie. ❖

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. Members also qualify for membership in New Mexico Educators Federal Credit Union. 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 cactus poster designed by Lisa Mandelkern. These can be ordered from our poster chair or book sales representative.



New Mexico wildflower posters: \$8 (nonmembers, \$10)
Cactus poster: \$5 (nonmembers, \$8)

Robledo Vista Nursery
 Nursery Grown
Alligator Junipers & Ocotillos

5' to 6' tall specimens, your choice \$95.00.
 We have a great selection of hardy Cacti and Agaves.
 Specializing in unique and hard to find plants.
 Serving the Las Cruces & El Paso area. By appointment.
www.RobledoVista.com • 575-541-8083 • 915-203-4385

MOUNTAIN STATES WHOLESALE NURSERY
Serving New Mexico Since 1969

We specialize in:

- New Plant Introductions
- Native Plants
- Custom Growing
- Deliveries throughout New Mexico

 P.O. Box 2500
 Litchfield Park, AZ
 800.840.8509 • 623.247.8509
www.mswn.com



NPSNM Membership Application

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail/Fax _____

*I (we) wish to affiliate with the checked chapter:
 (Please check only one)*

- Albuquerque
- El Paso, TX
- Gila (Silver City)
- Las Cruces
- No affiliation
- I am interested in forming a new chapter in
- Otero (Alamogordo)
- San Juan (Farmington)
- Santa Fe
- Taos

Annual Dues:

Individual	\$ 25
Family	30
Friend of the Society	50
Sponsor	100
Patron	250
Life Member	1,000
Limited Income, Students, and Seniors (65+)	15

Total: \$ _____

Remember that 25% of contributions above regular dues are returned annually to the individual chapters!



Make your check payable to

NPSNM

and send to

Membership Secretary

PO Box 35388, Albuquerque NM 87176

Native Plant Society of New Mexico

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Las Cruces, NM 88005
Permit No. 946

Printed on Recycled Paper



NEWSLETTER

of the

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
OF NEW MEXICO

is available online.

Download PDFs of this and
recently archived issues
at the NPSNM website:
<http://npsnm.unm.edu>

Native Plant Society of New Mexico
2010 Annual Meeting

Gateway to the Gila

August 12 to August 15 Silver City



Items are still being accepted for the
silent auction to be held this August at the annual meeting
in Silver City. Anyone with an item to donate can contact the
silent auction organizer, C. N. Flanders, at (575) 534-9355
or cnspikeflanders@gmail.com. Pictured here are just a few
of the many excellent items available for auction.