

**Gila Chapter
New Mexico Native Plant Society
2015 Annual Report**

Part I: Officers and Board of Directors

Officers

Ron Groves – President
Open – Vice President
Pam Bryant – Treasurer
Jeff Boyd – Secretary
Keller Suberkropp – Past President

Board of Directors

Charles Holmes
Joan Limmer
Elroy Limmer

Committee Chairs

Joan Limmer – Membership
Keller Suberkropp- Chapter Representative
Sue Coe Brown – Publicity
Jeff Boyd – Education
Kevin Keith– Field Trips
Betty Spence - Social

Quarterly Board Meetings were held to conduct business and finances for Gila Chapter of the NPSNM

As of January 1st the new officers elected at the November 21, 2014 meeting, we elected officers for the next two years as follows:

Ron Groves – President
Vice President is currently vacant
Pam Bryant – Treasurer
Jeff Boyd – Secretary
Keller Suberkropp –Past President

Elroy Limmer was appointed as a new member of the Board of Directors at the December meeting of the Board.

Part II: Programs, Field Trips, and Social Events

All programs were held in Harlan Hall on the campus of Western New Mexico University at 7:00 p.m. on the third Friday of each month. Programs were followed by a social gathering organized by the Social Chair and volunteers. Books of botanical and horticultural interest were on sale under the supervision of Ron Groves after each meeting.

Programs:

January 16: Richard Felger gave a presentation on **New Food Crops: Half a Century of Botanical Adventures**. There were 64 members in attendance. Social followed.

February 20: Past president and retired doctor Russ Kleinman discussed interesting ways to pursue your interest in plants during the winter. 35 members attended. Social followed.

March 20: Dr. Jose Herrera gave a presentation on, **Fungi Inhabiting the Roots of Native Arid Land Grasses**. 26 members attended. Social followed.

April 17: Dr. Bill Norris and Tim Geddes provided an **Overview of an ongoing (since 2004) vascular plant inventory of City of Rocks State Park**. The presentation, featured Tim's photography, and a discussion of the importance of basic plant inventory work in this age of waning floristic research. 31 members attended. Social followed.

September 18: Matt Schultz, Forest Planner and Mitchel White, Forest Ecologist for the Gila NF gave a present a program explaining, **The planning process for the future of the Gila National Forest**. 25 members attended. Social followed

October 16: Dr. Richard Felger of the University of Arizona Herbarium and Sky Island Alliance gave a presentation on , **Native Plants for Food, Fun and Beauty - for Today and a Global Dry Future**. 38 members attended. Social followed.

November 20: Dr. Dale Zimmerman spoke to us on **Butterflies and Native Plant Hosts of New Mexico: Habitat Restoration** and Patrice Mutchnick, Botanist, described the progress on the re the native plant restoration project **The Butterfly Way Project** at the Gila River Farm. 49 members attended. Social followed.

Field Trips: Organized and led by Kevin Keith.

April 19: a fair-sized group of us "hit the trail" for the Big Juniper Tree near Ft. Bayard, Trails 55 and 55A. Some of the notable plants encountered were *Pinus cembroides* (Mexican Pinon), *Conopholis alpinus* var. *mexicana* (Ground Cone), which is parasitic on the roots of *Quercus gambelii*. And of course Juniperus deppeana (the really *big* Alligator Juniper).

May 17: A group of us descended into the fascinating area of Meadow Creek (near Signal Peak). Thirty-four new entries were added to the already extensive plant list including the *Corallorhiza wisteriana* (Spring Coralroot Orchid), a large population of *Crataegus wootoniana* (Wooton's Hawthorn) which was in bloom, and a number of mosses were identified (thanks to Russ Kleinman).

June 21: On our field trip to Little Cherry Creek we added a dozen new species to the existing list : *Lactuca graminifolia* (Arizona Lettuce), the delicate and easily overlooked *Androsace occidentalis* (Western Rock Jasmine) and three shade-lovers on north-facing rock outcrops – *Heuchera novomexicana* (New Mexico Alumroot), *Valeriana arizonica* (Arizona Valerian) and *Sedum cockerellii* (Cockerell's Stonecrop).

July 19: A group went to Tadpole Ridge, FS Trail 232, in the Pinos Altos Range, elevation 7300' - 7700'. Many legumes were in flower: *Cologania angustifolia* (Long Leaf Cologania), *Lathyrus leucanthus* (Rocky Mt. Sweetpea), *Lotus wrightii* (Wright's Trefoil), *Phaseolus pedicellatus* var. *grayanus* (Gray's Lima Bean) and half a dozen others. The unusual *Eriogonum alatum* (Winged Wild Buckwheat) was in bloom.

August 16: A group trekked through the Lower Gallinas, FS Trail 795, in the Black Range. Elevation: 6670 -6800. Numerous plants were in full bloom, some seldom seen: *Allium cernuum* (the Nodding Onion), *Echeandia flavescens* (the Crag Lily), *Dichondra argentea* (Pony's Foot), and *Scrophularia macrantha* (Red Figwort).

September 20: The turnout was good for the season finale with 14 participants. *Rivinia humilis* (Pidgeon Berry), with ripe red berries, was found sheltered within the driplines of juniper. *Maurandya antirrhiniflora* (Little Snapdragon Vine), with its triangular, hastately lobed leaves and purple flowers, delighted us at our shady lunch spot overlooking the river.

Social Events:

December 15: Our Holiday Party was held at The Commons at the Volunteer Center, 40 members attended. Members brought a dish to share and the Chapter provided drinks and pork roast.

Part III: Other Activities

Native Plant Sale: Native plants from Mountain States along with plants from Lone Mountain Natives were made available to members of the Silver City community by the Gila Chapter. Plants could be ordered from the GNPS website or during the Presale held as a part of the Home & Garden Expo on March 20th and 21st Grant County Business & Convention Center. The Presale was staffed by a number of volunteers (supervised by Keller Suberkropp) who greeted customers and took orders. Charles Holmes advised on plants for customer needs, and Elroy Limmer presented a slide show of the plants that were available for sale. The sale resulted in a net profit of \$725.66 after a contribution of \$1,130 (at cost) of plants purchased for the Silva Creek Garden.

Earth Day Celebration: The Gila Chapter of the NM Native Plant Society had a booth for Earth Day in Penny Park as in past years. The day before Earth Day was the pickup day for native plant orders. Again a number of volunteers helped move and sort plants that had been

ordered so that customers could pick up plants they had purchased. On Earth Day, Ron Groves offered books on native plants and southwest gardening for purchase.

Red Hot Children's Fiesta: The Gila Chapter was represented by Ron Groves, Pam Bryant, Sue Coe Brown, and Keller Suberkropp at the Red Hot Children's Fiesta in September, at Penney Park. Activities designed by Trish Hurley promoting appreciation of pollinators and native plants were provided for the children attending. We interacted with two hundred children and their parents.

Informational tables at the Downtown Farmer's Market: Members worked the tables providing information on native plants and the purpose of the Gila Native Plant Society. In late October, in conjunction with Lone Mountain Natives, members (new and existing) were offered a 15% discount on plants.

Continuing work at Silva Creek Botanical Garden: Metal artwork to place around the old railroad water tank in the garden was installed. New beds were built, new pathways were laid, water lines were put in. GNPS donated \$1,130.78 in plants at cost to the Garden.

This garden is currently being directed by Elroy Limmer, Keller Suberkropp, and Betsy Kaido. It is being maintained by volunteers from the Gila chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico.

Adult Educational Programs: GNPS offered a Grass Identification workshop, led by Dr William Norris, Botany professor at WNMU, Dr. Russ Kleinman, Adjunct Botany professor at WNMU, and Dr. Richard Felger, Professor Emeritus from the University of Arizona. The workshops ran for 6 weeks from August 26th thru September 30th. We had 16 folks attend.

Youth Educational Programs: GNPS signed a Memorandum of Understanding between GNPS and Tricia Hurley for implementation of up to 7 education sessions with local schools, with a payment of \$500. All of the classes were held at our Silva Creek Garden site.

Grants funded by the Gila Chapter: We funded two grants during 2015. One grant went for the production of the "Proceedings of the 5th Natural History of the Gila Symposium (Feb. 25-27, 2014). The other grant went to the Butterfly Way Project, a native plant restoration project along the corridor of the Gila River. The mission is to promote an increase in the diversity of plant hosts for butterflies, birds, bees, and other pollinators.

Gila River Festival: Once again GNPS was a major sponsor of the Gila River Festival.

Book Sales: Net sales were \$598.97. After a couple of years of declining book sales we are concentrating on selling our remaining inventory from our web site. The work on the web site should be done in early spring. Most of the interest in books was focused on print on demand books for classes. This was simply a service as we only charged what it cost us. When the Carter's moved to Colorado we were given the remainder of their inventory. For this year we agreed to assume the ad cost in the NPSNM Newsletter.