

2018

REPORT OF THE LAS CRUCES CHAPTER OF NPSNM

Contacts:

President	Carolyn Gressitt	575-523-8413
Vice-President	Vic Crane	575-635-3735
Recording Secretary	Joy Goldbaum	575-527-8620
Membership	John Freyermuth	575-523-8413
Treasurer	Earlene Brookshear	575-524-0630
Chapter Rep	Joan Woodward	575-527-4640
Conservation Rep	Marcia Corl	907-744-0014

A. EVENTS

(# Attendees in brackets)

January

Meeting: Wed. Jan. 24, 7:00 p.m. NMSU students present "Programs from the NMC Herbarium." Trystan Harpold presents "Natives vs. Exotics: The Benefits of Going Local," and Chloe Battista presents: "Seeds of Success, Seed Saving, and the Millenium Seed Bank." [23]

Field Trip: Sat. Jan. 27, 9:00 a.m.: Mesilla Bosque State Park. [7]

February

Meeting: Wed. Feb. 28, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Lara Prihodko, NMSU Animal & Range Sciences, presents "Transhumant Pastoralism In West Africa and Nepal." [15]

Field Trip: Sat. March 3, 8:00 a.m.: Otero Mesa. [8]

March

Meeting: Wed. March 28, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Kathryn Stoner, NMSU Fish, Wildlife & Conservarion Ecology, presents "Mexican Long-nosed Bats and their Relationship with Columnar Cacti." [26]

Field Trip: Sat. March 31, 8:00 a.m.: Cedar Hills [14]

April

Meeting: Wed. Apr. 25, 7:00 p.m. Marcia Corl presents "A Virtual Tour of Otero Mesa." [21]

Garden Tour: Sat. Apr. 28, 9:00 a.m.: Meet at Fairacres Post Office for tour of gardens of Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, Wilma & Bobbie Hutson, Lisa Mandelkern, and Vic Crane. [17]

May

Field Trip: Sat. May 5, 8:00 a.m. Tortugas Mountain. [4]

Meeting: Wed. May 23, 7:00 p.m. Zachary Rogers, NMSU, presents "Madagascar, the Red Island: A Naturalist's Paradise." [23]

June

Field Trip: Sat. June 2, 7:00 a.m. at Bank of Rio Grande Parking Lot, or 7:30 a.m. at Small Missile Range Gate for all-day tour of White Sands Missile Range led by Dr. David Lee Anderson. [22]

Field Trip: Sat. June 23, 8:00 a.m. Tour of Susannah Calhoun's Flower Farm in La Mesa. [10]

Meeting: Wed. June 27, 7:00 p.m. Susannah Calhoun presents "Sustainable, locally-grown flowers for markets in Las Cruces." [24]

July

Meeting: Wed. July 25, 7:00 p.m. Tour of the NMC NMSU Herbarium. [30] Thanks to Sara Fuentes-Soriano, Zachary Rogers, and student Trystan Harpold for this great evening!

Field Trip: Sat. July 28, 8:00 a.m. All-day tour of Sacramento Mountains to see rare *Cirsium vinaceum* in bloom. [10]

August

Meeting: Wed. Aug. 22, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Dawn Browning, NMSU, presents "Southwest Season Trackers: Citizen Science Fills Gap for Desert Plant Phenology." [21]

Field Trip: Sat. Aug. 25, 8:00 a.m. Aguirre Springs [6]

September

[Annual Conference in Silver City, Sept. 6-9]

Meeting: Wed. Sept. 26, 7:00 p.m. Kirsten Romig presents "Briophytic Reflections of a Cowgirl Botanist from the Jornada Range." [20]

Field Trip: Sat. Sept. 29, 8:00 a.m. Red House Mountain [5]

October

Meeting: Wed. Oct. 24, 7:00 p.m. Dr. Nicole Pietrasiak, NMSU, presents "A closer look into the cryptogam diversity at White Sands National Monument." [23]

Field Trip: Sat. Oct. 27, 9:00 a.m. Soledad/Bar Canyon [11]

November

Workshop: Sat. Nov. 17, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at NMSU Herbarium. Sara Digby presented "Herbal Allies from a Bioregional Perspective." NMSU students Sarah Ramirez and Xavier Lovatos made additional presentations. [36]

Meeting: Wed. Nov. 28, 7:00 p.m. NMSU graduate student Alexander Abair presents "Mints of New Mexico and around the World." [20]

Field Trip: Sat. Dec. 1, 9:00 a.m. Peña Blanca [7]

Annual Totals of Events Attendees

A total of 119 attendees went on NPSNM Las Cruces field trips in 2018. An additional 36 individuals attended our Herbal Allies Workshop in November. Total attendance for monthly meetings was 246.

B. Special Events & Projects of Support to the Community and to NMSU

Earth Day: Sat. Apr. 21, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Earth Day activities were held at the Plaza de Las Cruces near Main Street in downtown Las Cruces. NPSNM had a booth with display provided by the NMSU Herbarium with activities for children. Special thanks to Vic Crane for setting up his canopy, and to volunteers Sara Fuentes, Zachary Rogers, Carolyn Gressitt, Julie Groth-Sorensen, Cheryl Beymer, Joy Goldbaum, and John Freyermuth. Flower and Cactus posters were displayed and sold along with books. Live plants provided additional color and interest. Children enjoyed stamps and games.

Herbarium Volunteers: Year-round and ongoing. NPSNM/Las Cruces volunteers at the NMSU Herbarium included Lisa Mandelkern, Cheryl Beymer, Vic Crane, Julie Groth-Sorensen, John Freyermuth, and Carolyn Gressitt.

Dripping Springs Garden Committee: Year-round and ongoing. Earlene Brookshear (chair). Vic Crane, Carolyn Gressitt, John Freyermuth, Leslie Bezner, Julie Groth-Sorensen, Marcia Corl, Deb McKeown, Helen Zagana, Stephen Campbell, and Meg Freyermuth. The committee was active through most of 2018, and was ably chaired and coordinated by Earlene Brookshear. Special thanks to Vic Crane for technical assistance with irrigation, to Leslie Bezner for mapping project,

to Marcia Corl for providing seeds for experimental starter garden, and to Eileen Davis of the BLM for her hands-on help and also for her help in getting volunteers to water plants during dry spells. Thanks also to Friends of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks and Patrick Nolan for obtaining and providing 35 plants that were added to the garden on September 22, National Public Lands Day. And thanks to Christian Velarde of KRWG TV for the interview and documentary regarding the project. Besides Sept. 22, regular workdays for NPSNM volunteers were Feb. 16, March 2, Apr. 20, May 25, June 8, Aug. 3, Aug. 31, and Oct. 19. Some from our group attended a luncheon for all BLM volunteers on Oct. 31.

Jornada Field Botany:

In 2018, some of us again participated, as in 2017, in The Jornada Field Botany field trips, led by Kirsten Romig. These are bi-monthly field trips, Jan.-Nov., on the 2nd Tuesday of every other month. We appreciate the Jornada's willingness to reach out to the community, and we most appreciate Kirsten's help with our botanizing: great teacher!

On-going:

In regards to the Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park: As we reported last year, this park was in danger of being closed and turned over to Game and Fish, ostensibly because it was not making enough money. The Game & Fish Dept. never did move in because of opposition from local legislators and environmental groups, as well as local officials, such as the mayor of the town of Mesilla. Because we are stakeholders & previous donors, we will continue watching this situation carefully. Until the legislature has a set budget, it is unlikely that the park will change from the current status of being open every day & having no fees. Hopefully, with the new legislature, there will be a return to full park status, **or** to become part of the far-flung Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument! We will keep you posted.

Carolyn Gressitt