

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO  
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER 2020



## President's Message

6/21/2020

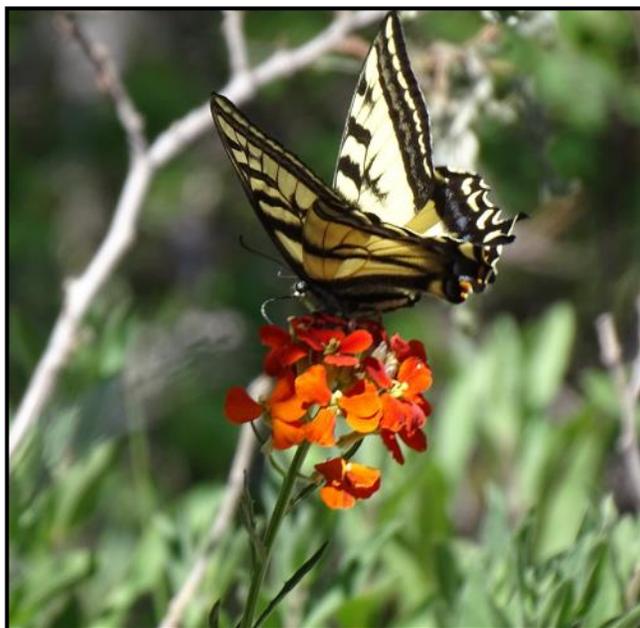
This group is fun to be involved with. Until the pandemic changed all our plans, we would be meeting regularly, botanizing all over the place on field trips from spring's first flowers (sometimes in the snow!) through fall frosts; venturing all over New Mexico. Botanizing as we define it is hiking at a slow pace looking for flowers, at birds and reptiles, all while socializing and generally enjoying the outdoors; we move a little faster when we are atop a mountain and need to hustle down before afternoon thunderstorms.

We only collect photographs of flowers and whatever creatures are on them. Those of us learning new flowers like myself are helped by those who are familiar with them; sometimes one of us knows a common name and someone else knows the genus name, maybe the species name; sometimes we're stumped and someone gets a photo to look up later. Everyone learns a little on each hike.

During the colder months, board and other active members met quarterly to decide on who we would enjoy a presentation from during our monthly meetings throughout the year AND where we would like to look for flowers the following year. We participate in conservation education at festivals throughout the year. We put together a great series of hikes for this year; alas, we had to cancel our hikes due to the pandemic. Our solution is to post plant lists on the Albuquerque Chapter NPSNM website. We are also holding our meeting presentations online through the Zoom meeting platform for members and native plant enthusiasts who contact us through our NPSNM website and/or Facebook page.

Our chapter is looking for people who would like to become active volunteers for posts including hospitality, education outreach coordinator, program chair, even president. Most of us active as board members and core volunteers in the Albuquerque Chapter have been doing this for a while. I have been newsletter editor for four years now; I thoroughly enjoy it. Contact me or one of the other board members and volunteers if you would like to know more. We are a pretty easy-going group of folks who enjoy native plants.

Happy Trails - **Diane**



Swallowtail butterfly on Western Wallflower  
(*Erysimum capitatum*), June, Sandia Mountains  
Photo © Lee Regan

### Cover Photo

Claret cup cactus  
(*Echinocereus triglochidiatus*)

Quarai Mission ruins  
Photo © Pam McBride

### PLEASE NOTE

- While there are no field trips until further notice, the Albuquerque Chapter web page has plant lists and locations for flower hikes on your own.
- Online meetings are held for members and non-member requests made through our website:

[www.npsnm.org](http://www.npsnm.org)

## San Pedro Parks Wilderness, May 2020

### Lee Regan

When it gets hot in the city, as it did last week, it's a good time to escape to the mountains' water, land and sky. With trails in the Sandia, Manzano and Jemez mountains within a couple hours' drive, we are fortunate in Albuquerque to have many such opportunities. Another favorite destination is the San Pedro Parks Wilderness in the Santa Fe National Forest, north of Cuba, NM. The "parks" are high, wet meadows (9-10,000 feet) that offer cooler temperatures, wonderful scenery, and of course, wildflowers - some of which may not be seen in other areas. The trail to San Gregorio Reservoir is a fairly easy and popular one; going beyond the reservoir takes one into the higher forests and the "parks."

On FR 70, a well-maintained gravel road, we by-passed the crowded San Gregorio Trailhead, continuing seven miles further to the Palomas Trailhead. The initial portion of this trail is a rigorous climb – about one mile going fairly steeply uphill. I was glad to spot some flowers – Candytuft (*Noccaea fendlerii*); Strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*); Tuber Starworts; and Blue Violets - along the way to stop and catch my breath.

The trail descends to a stream and then climbs gradually to the more level area of parks. In the stream bank and at other wet places along the trail, there were Marsh Marigolds (*Psychrophila leptsepala*) and I also spotted an unusual "grass" - actually a Water Sedge, Jim McGrath informs me, (*Carex aquatilis*).

Plantain-leaf Buttercups (*Ranunculus alismifolium* var. *montanum*) were abundant, covering large areas of grass in some places. Their bright petals form rather leaky "cups" but the broad basal leaves are a clear indication of the species. Golden Pea (*Thermopsis montanus*) were just beginning to blossom, but already drawing the attention of bees. Less obvious but not less interesting were the tiny blossoms of the flowerheads in several patches of Diamond-leaf Saxifrage (*Micranthes rhomboidei*). With a sharp eye, one also finds the lovely pink Pygmy Bitterroot (*Lewisia pygmaea*).



Marsh Marigold (*Psychrophila leptsepala*)  
in San Pedro Parks wilderness

Photo © Lee Regan



Pygmy Bitterroot (*Lewisia pygmaea*)  
in San Pedro Parks wilderness

Photo © Lee Regan



Elk in San Pedro Parks wilderness

Photo © Lee Regan

We had seen a few elk running across the trail at a couple of places, and approaching one of the parks stealthily on our return trip, we found a pair grazing lazily. So I even got to shoot one! . . . with my camera.

Here's a link to more photos: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/A9wXnBUJbgi4MhMYA>

### Lee's travel directions to San Pedro Parks Wilderness:

From Bernalillo, take Hwy 550 to Cuba (65 miles). There's a portion of the route on Hwy 550 past San Ysidro that has especially interesting geological formations for scenery. Turn Right onto Hwy 126 in Cuba, Highway 126 gets nice after you leave town and is especially neat as it winds its way up to the National Forest. The road goes past a settlement called Deer Lake (9.4 mi) and a little ways past that goes over the crest of a gap. Slightly further downhill, is a left turn onto Forest Road 70, heading to San Gregorio trailhead. The forest road is unpaved, but in fairly good condition - well-used by people who camp in grassy areas along the road. You will come to the large San Gregorio parking lot on the right, (trailhead on the left). Continue on Forest Road 70 for seven miles if you want to hike from the Palomas Trailhead.



Golden Pea (*Thermopsis rhombifolia*) with a bee in San Pedro Parks Wilderness

Photo © Lee Regan

## Quarai Mission Ruins

By Pam McBride

Unfortunately, like all field trips scheduled for spring and summer of this year, the one Dara Saville and I were going to lead on 5/31 to Quarai Mission ruins was cancelled. To give folks an idea of what to expect if they choose to make the approximately 1 ½ hour drive to Quarai from Albuquerque, Judith Phillips and I went for an exploratory foray, driving in separate vehicles. One note of caution if you do go: bring insect repellent. After our visit I had been voraciously bitten by mosquitoes that left large dark red welts that took days to go away.

The intent of the original field trip was to “explore edible and medicinal plants in the area”. Judith and I went mainly to see what might be in bloom on May 27<sup>th</sup>. I will do my best to give you a little of both. There were a lot of fruit bearing native shrubs and historic apple trees, but none of these were in bloom. The list was rather short, but still rewarding, especially to be able to see two plants I had never seen before. The first one we encountered was a member of the mint family, germander (*Teucrium laciniatum*), that Judith recognized immediately but was a first for me.

We spent a few minutes lamenting the fact that it was unavailable at nurseries as a landscape plant since it would make a great rock garden specimen with southern exposure. This was growing at the edge of the concrete walkway against a wall at the beginning of the path beyond the visitor’s center.



Germander (*Teucrium laciniatum*) at Quarai Mission ruins

Photo © Pam McBride



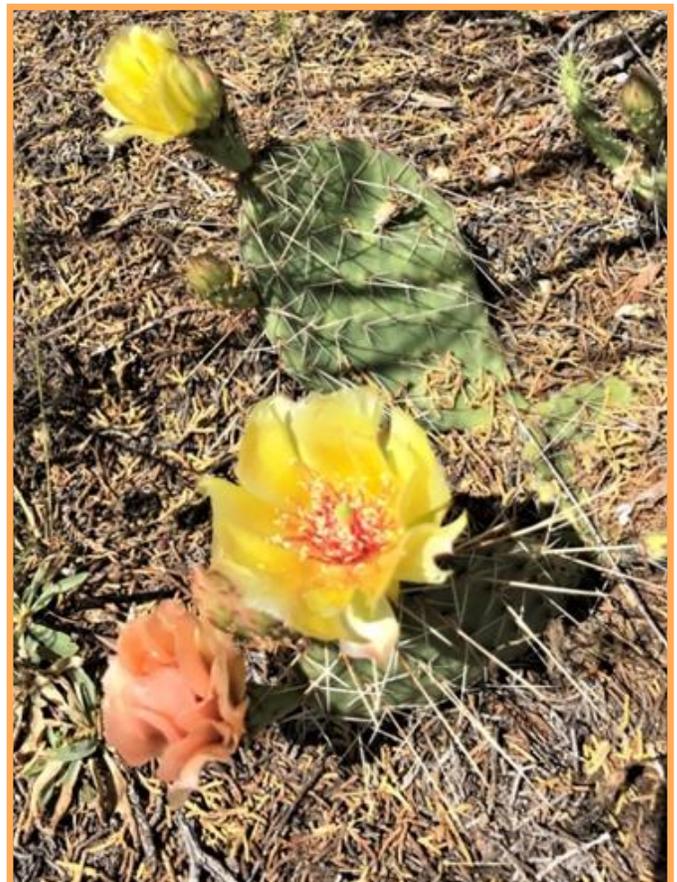
Scurf pea (*Psoraleidum tenuiflorum*)  
Photo © Judith Phillips

The other taxon that we both had never encountered was scurf pea (*Psoraleidum tenuiflorum*).

The leaves of scurf pea were moistened and applied to the axilla, feet, or any part of the body for purification by the Zuñi (Stevenson 1915:24). Gilmore (1919) recorded the use of the decoction among the Dakota for consumption and the Lakota used it for headaches, while the Ramah Navajo smoked or drank it for the flu (Vestal 1952).

Other beautiful plants in flower included clar-et cup cactus (*Echinocereus triglochidiatus*), plain's prickly pear (*Opuntia polyacantha*), Antelope horns milkweed (*Asclepias asperula*), and Organ Mountain larkspur (*Delphinium wootonii*).

Ethnographically, after the glochids were removed by burning them off or rolling in sand, the fruits of prickly pear and hedgehog cactus were eaten raw, boiled, or dried (Castetter 1935:26, 35-6).



Plains prickly pear (*Opuntia polyacantha*)  
Photo © Pam McBride

The Spanish name for antelope-horns milkweed is *Inmortal* because when the root is gathered for medicinal purposes and a substantial portion of the root is left in the ground, it will regrow the following year. The root of *Inmortal* according to Michael Moore (1979:90) “ranks as one of the dozen or so prime plant medicines in the United States.” It dilates the bronchia and stimulates lymph drainage from the lungs and is therefore a medicine that can treat asthma, pleurisy, bronchitis, and lung infections in general. There are several other uses listed in Moore’s book.

Along Zapato Creek which runs through the site, currants, chokecherries, wolfberry, serviceberry, and Wood’s rose grow in profusion. These taxa all produce edible fruits and according to Baker Morrow (2008), were planted by the prehistoric occupants of the pueblo on the south edge of the creek, in clearings in the woodland, and on the southern hillslopes

in areas he calls shrub hollow gardens. There are huge specimens of *algerita* growing on the property (also native fruit producers) along with apple trees and wild plums that were planted by the WPA in the early 1930s. So whether the prehistoric inhabitants planted fruit-bearing shrubs and trees or they were naturally occurring along Zapato Creek, inhabitants had many native plants to exploit for food and medicine.



Antelope horns milkweed (*Asclepias asperula*)

Photo © Pam McBride

#### References Cited

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Gilmore, M.R.

1919 *Uses of Plants by the Indians of the Missouri River Region. Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1911-1912, pp. 43-154. Washington D.C., Government Printing Office.*

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1979 *Medicinal Plants of the Mountain West. Museum of New Mexico Press, Santa Fe.*

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Morrow, Baker

2008 *Canyon Gardens: The Ancient Pueblo Landscapes of the American Southwest*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

Stevenson, Matilda Cox

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1952 *Ethnobotany of the Ramah Navajo*. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology. Reports of the Ramah Navajo. Report No. 4. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University.

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## Online Resources for Landscaping with Natives

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico website, [www.npsnm.org](http://www.npsnm.org) has several plant booklets about gardening for native plants.

We recently updated our native plant booklet with pollinator information and new natives, a project headed by Virginia Burris. The 78-page (pdf) book with color photos and landscape information, called Plants for Central New Mexico Gardens, can be downloaded from our website:

<https://www.npsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Central-NM-Gardens-2018.pdf>

We have a few printed copies of the first edition available for \$5 each. Any of us volunteers can find a copy and get it to you one way or another.

There's a planting guide for Santa Fe County with many of the same natives as in the Albuquerque area:

A Guide to Native Plants for the Santa Fe Landscape:

[https://www.npsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NPGuide\\_SantaFe\\_Gardening\\_Landscape.pdf](https://www.npsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NPGuide_SantaFe_Gardening_Landscape.pdf)

Another option is Pollinator Plant Recommendations for New Mexico

<https://www.npsnm.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Pollinator-plants-LLPMC.pdf>

There are other plant lists, mostly without photos and made by botanists, on the 'Welcome' tab entitled: What is a Native Plant? <https://www.npsnm.org/education/native-plants/>

**Need more information? Explore our website resources, links and other chapter pages**

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## **Best Wildflower Hikes New Mexico by Christina Selby Falcon Guides, 2020**

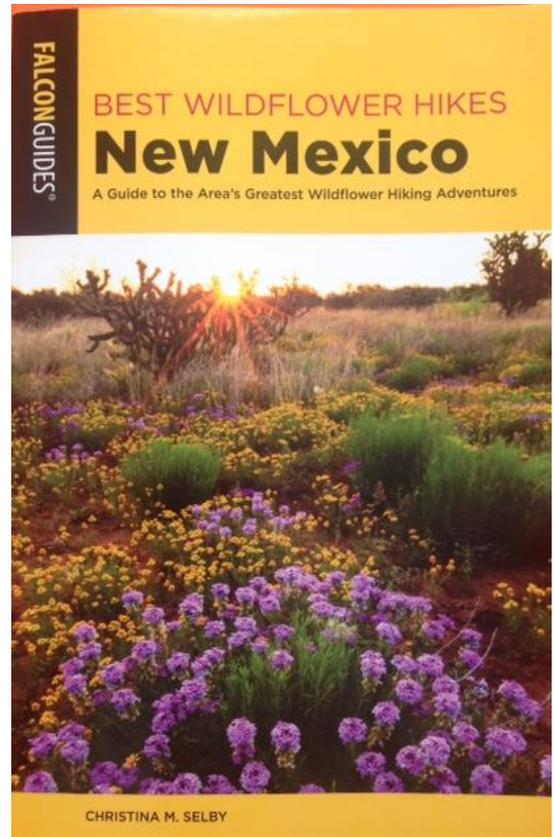
Book Review by Tom Stewart:

Wildflower identification books — I got 'em. Trail guides for here and there — got 'em. But here is an entirely different animal. Christina Selby, avid hiker, conservation photographer, naturalist and storyteller, has combined her passions in providing an invaluable resource for nature lovers across New Mexico.

If you have heard tales of the Gila National Forest but never been there, seen a postcard photo of the intriguing Organ Mountains, or wondered about the flora in those beautiful peaks east of Taos, this book will prompt you finally to plan a healthy, wonderful excursion. Forty hike descriptions begin with an invaluable summary of facts about the trail itself — access, length, difficulty, seasons, general and botanical attractions, and so forth. Each trek is then detailed in a narrative that includes flowers you are likely to find and even nice places to stop for lunch.

The whole book is adorned with excellent photography that ranges from brooding, cloudy landscapes to sparkling wildflower closeups. This is not a guide to plant identification, but selected species are featured in profiles that bring in their natural history. The amount of information and the care with which it is organized tell that this work is an act of love.

Do read the entire introduction, with its background information and important conservation points. The caveats about the seasonality of New Mexico wildflowers provides a reality check to the less experienced explorer. A slight disappointment is that the far northwest and southeast regions of the state are little represented. Another is that there are not more hikes rated as easy and approachable to families with younger kids. These are understandable outcomes of climate and geography, accessibility, and the intention to select the very best wildflower experiences. For that purpose, I cannot conceive of a better result than this.



## Celebrating Pollinators Every Day

Diane Stevenson

6/28/2020

Today is the end of 2020 National Pollinator Week, officially hosted by the Pollinator Partnership, found at [www.pollinators.org](http://www.pollinators.org). Pollinators provide essential ecosystem services, giving us 70% of our food by doing what they do, pollinate flowers. I do what I do, plant native flowers to restore habitat on my small suburban yard; then relax and enjoy the show. The benefits for pollinators and other insects, wildlife, and my family are priceless.

Little did I know when I quit watering (during a drought) the Kentucky bluegrass and tall fescue lawn surrounding our new home, I would find so much joy from my love of native plants and wildlife around me. At home. Of course the lawn died, except the part shaded all day by my 35' Ponderosa pine. I watered the pine; I am grateful for the planter's foresight. My spouse and I planted a number of natives, including some easy flower seed (*Ratibida* and *Gaillardia*) as a mulch for a Canada Red chokecherry we moved. The neighbor's chocolate flower seed blew in; we planted Apache plume, three Rosemary cultivars (arid-adapted plants), *Salvia greggii*, Blackfoot daisy (*Melampodium leucanthum*), and several species of penstemons. We have a little blue grama and buffalograss unmowed lawn; other native grasses planted as 3" pots are still getting established. More natives and well-behaved arid-adapted trees, shrubs, and groundcovers provide food and shelter - habitat. There are a few mis-behaved native 'mistakes' I'll be editing for a while. Natives requiring very little water can get aggressive when overwatered.

This year, as we stay at home, we've enjoyed watching goldfinches eat seeds of Apache plume, chocolate flower, and the leaves of common sunflowers; I guess they like salad greens too. Our swallow nest by the front door fledged 8 chicks in two years now has new birds, Say's Phoebes; amazing flycatchers. Today was fledge day for the second clutch of 2; their first nest fledged 4! The adult pair are feeding insects while the young shelter in trees, the neighbors' and ours. We learned from the first group of fledglings that they nap a lot. Other new birds we've seen this year include bushtits and Goshawks. Many bird species regularly visit our birdbaths for a drink; trees, tomato cages, and bean poles for roosts, while talking amongst themselves. We've created a bird refuge complete with water. It is great entertainment; though Goshawks and other predatory birds are keenly aware of this as well.

Living near the Sandia Mountains, we can get larger wildlife in the neighborhood. Under February's full moon, we hiked into the wilderness area nearby and observed a family of four coyotes returning to their rocky den in the mountains after a night hunt. A few days later, a lone coyote trotted up our street one morning at breakfast. We humans are but one community that live in this space. I am happy to share my space as habitat for our food pollinators and the wildlife we've displaced. Are you?



Swallowtail on Golden Banner, aka Golden Pea (*Thermopsis montana*) Ellis trail, Sandia Mtns.  
Photo © Doris Eng



*Iris missouriensis* on Ellis Trail, Sandia Mtns., June 2020  
Photo © Doris Eng

**Studies in Native Plants, Background, Shadows, and Patterns:  
Walks in the Oxbow area of the Rio Grande Corridor in Albuquerque  
Photos © Lenore Goodell**



Lambert's locoweed (*Oxytropis lambertii*) on sandbar

*Explore the Oxbow area of the Rio Grande Corridor in Albuquerque city limits on several walks and you could see. . .*



Cursed buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*) on Oxbow outflow



Alkali yellowtops (*Flaveria campestris*) on sandbar



Buckbrush (*Ceanothus fendleri*) and aster along Jemez Falls Road in the Jemez Mountains  
Photo © Lenore Goodell

## ETCETERA

[https://riversedgewest.org/sites/default/files/resource-center-documents/Basic Guidelines for Seeding Native Grasses in Arid Semi Arid Ecoregions.pdf](https://riversedgewest.org/sites/default/files/resource-center-documents/Basic%20Guidelines%20for%20Seeding%20Native%20Grasses%20in%20Arid%20Semi%20Arid%20Ecoregions.pdf)

*While gathering materials for the Backyard workshop held in February, I picked up this 2008 native grass seeding document at the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center. These grasses need moisture at depths of 4" to 12" to survive long term.*

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/plantmaterials/pmc/west/nmpmc/>

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Earth Science Week - **No Child Left Inside:** <http://www.earthsciweek.org/ncli>

Guide for Organizing Your Outdoor Earth Science Event: October 11 - 17, 2020

NASA education resources: [NASA Earth Observatory: How to Interpret a Satellite Image](#)

Satellite images are full of useful and interesting information. These tips come from the NASA Earth Observatory's writers and visualizers, who use them to interpret images daily. They will help you get oriented enough to begin to unlock the rich information in a satellite image.

## NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER JULY-SEPTEMBER 2020 MEETINGS

**PLEASE NOTE: Monthly meetings are currently scheduled to take place via Zoom due to the pandemic.** Zoom meeting links are distributed to chapter members via e-mail prior to the meetings. For more info on **programs** and the Zoom meeting links, see the NPSNM website or Facebook page, or contact Jim McGrath: sedges [at] swcp.com or 505-697-1287.

### July 1. Meeting: Insects in Decline: Why It Matters and What We Must Do About It.

Insect conservationist Anna Walker, who works as the Species Survival Officer for Invertebrate Pollinators at the Albuquerque BioPark, discusses the evidence that insects are in decline and demonstrates why it matters. She will walk us through the current understanding of the plight of insects around the globe, with an emphasis on pollinators, and will help us imagine how our lives would be diminished without these tiny creatures sustaining and enriching our lives. Anna will also highlight what the Albuquerque BioPark is doing in partnership with the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) to mitigate these declines.



Rocky Mtn Penstemon & Blue Flax at Capulin Snowplay area, Sandia Mtns.  
Photo © Doris Eng



Rocky Mtn Penstemon, Yellow Sweet Clover, Geranium & Blue Flax at Capulin Snowplay area, Sandia Mtns.

Photo © Doris Eng

### August 5. Meeting. “The Tijeras Creek Remediation Project.”

Soilutions, Inc. consultant Jim Brooks discusses problems associated with Tijeras Creek and strategies to improve conditions in the watershed.

### September 2: Meeting. “Bernalillo County Vegetation Management without Glyphosate (RoundUp).”

Sites Southwest LLC consultant George Radnovich discusses weed control strategies on Bernalillo County lands. Among the recommendations are the use of native plants.

## FIELD TRIP NOTES

**All scheduled Field Trips are cancelled until further notice**

### Summer and Fall On-Your-Own Plant Walks

Several of our active members have created lists you can download and print for your own outdoor excursions. Check our Albuquerque Chapter NPSNM webpage for **Albuquerque Area Plant Lists** throughout the summer: <https://www.npsnm.org/about/chapters/albuquerque/>

**Be Prepared:** Presence of blooming plants depends on precipitation, so check the area you are intending to visit as well as weather and climate. Call ahead to see if the location you are visiting is open. As always, wear appropriate masks, clothing, boots, hats, rain gear, and sunscreen. Carry plenty of water, lunch, and snacks. Morning and weekday hikes on wide and/or loop trails will be less crowded – keep your social distance. Watch for rattlesnakes and other wild animals – they require more than six feet social distance. Plan on early morning hikes at higher elevations during the rainy season to avoid early afternoon thunderstorms. For more information on **field trips** contact Carol Conoboy: carolconoboy [at] gmail.com or 505-897-3530.

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Articles, photos, and news submissions for the Albuquerque chapter NPSNM Autumn Newsletter should be submitted via e-mail to Diane Stevenson by **September 21, 2020** to distevenson331 [at] hotmail.com. Any mistakes you see in this newsletter are mine. *Thank you!*

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### Become an NPSNM Member:

Join at <http://www.npsnm.org/membership/>

NPSNM is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the conservation of native New Mexico flora. The Society, and its local chapters, work to educate its members and promote the conservation of our native flora so future generations may enjoy our valuable resource.

### Membership Benefits

Members benefit from regional chapter meetings, field trips, an annual meeting, and four issues of the state newsletter each year. Some chapters also hold plant sales and annual seed exchanges and offer discounts on a variety of books providing information on native plant identification and gardening with New Mexico native plants.

Additional benefits to members include discounts on New Mexico Wildflower and Cactus posters.

### Albuquerque Chapter Benefits

Members who show a valid NPSNM membership card

- Qualify for Plant World discounts without having to purchase a Plant World membership
- Receive a 10% discount at Plants of the Southwest
- Receive a 10% discount at Santa Ana Garden Center

### NPSNM Albuquerque Chapter

#### Current Board of Directors – 2020

President: Diane Stevenson

Vice President: Tom Stewart

Program: Jim McGrath

Secretary: Dara Saville

Treasurer: Pam McBride

Field Trip Coordinator: Carol Conoboy

State Board Rep.: Judith Phillips

Membership: Ann-Marie Yaroslaski

Newsletter Editor: Diane Stevenson

Outreach Event Coordinator: **vacant**

Conservation: Sue Small

#### Core Group (essential volunteers)

Books: Lee Regan

Garden Center Chair: Irene Scotillo

Communications: Gary Hoe

Hospitality: **vacant**

Invasive Weeds Rep.: Don Heinze

Publicity: Irene Wanner

Habitat Gardening: Virginia Burris

Refreshments: Penny Hoe