

**NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER**

NEWSLETTER
WINTER 2021



Outgoing President's Message

Diane Stevenson

Thank you all for the opportunity to be Chapter President this very strange year. We accomplished a great deal in spite of the life-changing pandemic. We successfully hosted the **Backyard Refuge Design Workshop** February 15, supporting the Friends of the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge's **ABQ Backyard Refuge Program** focusing on native plant habitat needs and design for our home landscapes. The workshop was filled with 100 eager participants who were able to implement a few landscape improvements as we sheltered at home (I'd love to hear about your projects.) I finally was able to grow a few vegetables I'd been meaning to for years, successfully growing "native" Anasazi beans providing shelter for birds blown off-course during their fall commute to warmer climes.



Deadman Peak Trail vista, story on page 5

Photo © George Miller

We were able to have in-person meetings in January, February, and March in the New Mexico Museum of Natural History. We cancelled the April meeting, but learned to host online Zoom meetings starting in May. We hosted speakers for the rest of the year using Zoom for virtual meetings, learning as we went. There was even one field trip at the end of March to the Florida Mountains near Deming.

This newsletter travels through the state with a few adventures some of our members pursued in 2020 as well as landscaping ideas for fall color. Since we'll be mostly at home or work through spring and beyond, we can read. Two new books will be available to buy at local booksellers in March authored by our very own members, Dara Saville and George O. Miller, described on pages 11 & 12. Also, our chapter has books you can buy through the mail on page 13 to support our future conservation and education events once we can get out and about again. There is the ABC library book I reviewed and upcoming virtual meetings this winter, and more.

So sit back with your favorite hot beverage and enjoy reading and dreaming a little. While it has its challenges, the New Year is upon us.

Regards, *Diane*

Carol says Christmas tree mulch is a great soil acidifier in her orchard, smothering weeds and retaining soil moisture.

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COVER PHOTO

Late October in the Jemez Mountains, on a beautiful New Mexico day
Populus deltoides ssp. *wislizeni*,
Cottonwood

Photo © George Miller

City of Albuquerque Offers Christmas Tree Recycling

**Trees may be dropped off between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.,
Monday, December 28 through Sunday, January 10, 2021**

at the following locations:

Montessa Park Convenience Center, 3512 Los Picaros SE, 768-3930
Eagle Rock Convenience Center, 6301 Eagle Rock NE, 768-3925
Ladera Golf Course, 3401 Ladera Dr NW, 836-4449

For more information:

<https://www.cabq.gov/solidwaste/news/city-of-albuquerque-offers-christmas-tree-recycling>

Welcome to 2021!

New President's Message

Carol Conoboy

Thank you for being a member of the Albuquerque Chapter of Native Plant Society of New Mexico (NPSNM). We appreciate that you have adapted to monthly online meetings via Zoom. Our outstanding speakers share a wealth of knowledge. Our dedicated volunteers observe and protect the New Mexico native plants individually and by conservation collaborations. I hope to involve more young people in NPSNM in the future.

Although we may not be able to host open field trips and education outreach activities this year, let's accentuate the positive! We can enjoy nature. When the cold days in January and February are over, longer days will allow individual members to view many native plants near Albuquerque. Chapter members can notify us of open trails and where wildflowers are in bloom.

Our January 6th speaker is Ron Parry, retired Rice University Biochemist known as the "moth man." His natural history passion since childhood continues into retirement. Join us at 7:00 pm Wednesday, using the Zoom link sent to your e-mail for "An Introduction to the Moths of the Gila." You will find that moths can be as beautiful and fascinating as butterflies

Keep in touch with your Native Plant Society friends by phone and personal notes. This is a difficult time, but relief is coming in the months ahead. We will notify members of changes using our newsletter, website and e-mail.

Check www.NPSNM.org for updated information and opportunities for education, volunteering, hikes, and wildflowers in bloom after rains come.

Best wishes for a Healthy New Year!

Carol



Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Taos, NM

Photo © George Miller

"Our newsletter goal has always been to enhance communication, interest, and a sense of community among our members, especially those who can't regularly attend functions, which now includes us all. Articles on field trips, native landscaping and backyard pollinator habits, community and voluntary efforts, conservation issues, plant profiles, and lots of photos for visual interest are a few of the subjects that will educate and help members connect."

George Oxford Miller

IS IT SNOW???



Stunted Cottonwood, *Populus fremontii* v. *wislizenii*, at White Sands National Park

Photo © George Miller

White Sands Surprise

George Miller, 12/10/2020

I wasn't expecting to see vibrant fall colors when I visited White Sands, the nation's newest national park. The November sky was brilliant, the temperature balmy, and the sand glittered like powdery snow. Hiking over the crest of a dune, I came face to face with a stunted cottonwood tree. It stood alone like a ship with golden sails adrift on the sea of shifting dunes.

The tree seemed to be fighting for its life in its inhospitable, unstable habitat. Pushed by the wild-blown flow of sand, it listed at an angle, the leeward limbs dipping into the sand. The tree's taproot had evidently penetrated the hard pan of the ancient lakebed and found a moist layer. In a race for survival, the tree had to grow faster than the rising tide of sand that threatened to engulf it.

Gold against white was stunning, but the color show wasn't over. The red leaves of a scattered colony of three-leaf sumac blazed against the gypsum dunes like Biblical burning bushes. The spreading roots and stems stabilized its patch of sand so the bush created its own firmament in the shifting world.



Three Leaf Sumac, *Rhus trilobata* at White Sands

Photo © George Miller

Deadman Peaks

George Miller

The ominous name to this scenic section of the Continental Divide Trail southwest of Cuba gives no hint of the scenic geological formations and horizon-wide vistas. In mid-May I didn't really expect to find a festival of flora, but my wife Carole and I needed a day in the wild. The relative flat, five-mile loop about 75 miles from Albuquerque looked intriguing.

The excitement began soon after we turned off US Hwy 550 and onto a little two-track across BLM pinyon-juniper brushland. Soon we were surrounded by a cattle drive with the traditional cowboys and girls zigzagging their horses through the sage to keep the wandering cows on track. The rancher, who didn't seem to actually have a physical ranch, was moving his herd from one allotment to another.



We finally made our way through the herd and found the trailhead pullout beside a set of hoodoos below a low mesa. The trail gently ascended the mesa and followed the ridge. The peaks of eroded volcanic caps in the San Juan Basin, accentuated by the towering cone of Cabezon, stretched across the distance. Like a scattering of jewels, sego lilies and claret cup cacti dotted the rocky slopes, but little else was in bloom.

We followed the sinuous mesa edge past several collard lizards sunning on rocks and a little cluster of fishhook cactus in bloom, and more bizarrely sculpted rock formations. The trail eventually reunited with the road, and the herd of cattle resting while the cowboys ate their lunch. This would be a great spring hike for 2021 if we can get our field trips back on track.

Photos clockwise from top right:
New Mexico cattle drive; Cowboy on cattle drive;
Close-up of *Echinocereus coccineus* flower; *E. coccineus* below Deadman Peak; Collared lizard on rock

All photos © George Miller



Book Review

Habitat Conservation by a Scientist

A Buzz in the Meadow

The Natural History of a French Farm

Dave Goulson

Picador: New York, 2014

Diane Stevenson, 11/05/2020

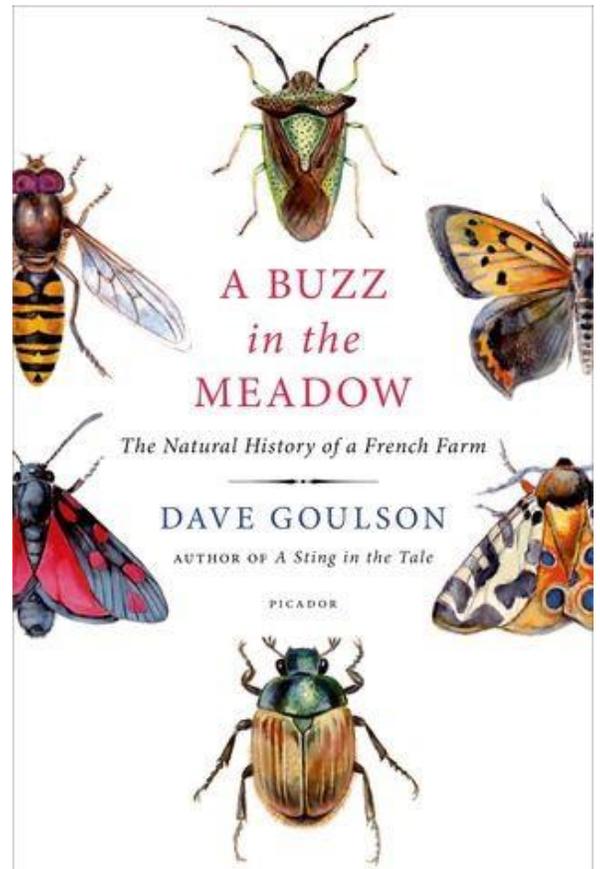
Habitat conservation and land stewardship are integral to my holistic conservative values. When I discovered *A Buzz in the Meadow; The Natural History of a French Farm*, during my search for insect conservation strategies in other parts of our only Earth, I was in for a treat. Biologist Dave Goulson, a Professor of Biological Studies at the University of Stirling in Scotland, is a leading world conservationist and self-proclaimed “wildlife-obsessed biologist.” He founded the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in 2006 and has earned many prestigious awards for his work as a scientist.

From the colorful cover of the book, I was entertained, educated, and elucidated on how we humans are destroying our children’s future by occupying and developing every square inch (or should I say 2.54 square centimeters) of our planet and destroying the tiniest creatures we know nothing about. The jacket declares this book to be “a powerful call to arms for nature lovers everywhere.”

I was intrigued by the title, having never traveled to France, save in books and photos. What is a French farm like? What wildflowers grow there? There is so much more to the well-told story. History, cheese, the author’s background, all help create a vivid description of natural life in a meadow. I was propelled back to a favorite pastime, learning. Dave Goulson is a marvelous educator. He has a passion for science and the experiments he is always engaged in to learn even more. Just like me. Be prepared for the adventure of looking up wildflower names to find family, genus and species. They are often described by common names used in the United Kingdom.

Dave Goulson has sounded the wake-up call. We need to work quickly and very hard to prevent habitat loss world-wide so as not to be the generations who caused the extinction of a million species. This book is that important. I don’t have 13 hectares (about 32 acres) of meadow to allow natural ecology to rule. I have seen what ecological landscaping with native plants can do for local wildlife at my postage-stamp suburban home. I’m all in.

I look forward to reading Dr. Goulson’s first book, *A Sting in the Tale*, as I thoroughly enjoyed learning through this marvelous read.



A Visit to the Sawtooth and Datil Mountains

By Jim McGrath

December 19, 2020

A few years ago, I chose to represent the Albuquerque chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico at the Magdalena Collaborative. The Cibola National Forest has encouraged the development of collaboratives that act in an advisory capacity with the Ranger Districts of the Cibola National Forest. The collaboratives allow various stakeholders to assemble in one room and discuss issues that pertain to that portion of the National Forest contained in that Ranger District. These periodic meetings allow people from diverse organizations to get to know one another and to hear and understand their different perspectives. Ranchers, off-road vehicle advocates, bicycle enthusiasts, native plant and wilderness advocates, land grant representatives, Native Americans that use the national forest as sources of plants and animal parts for their food, clothing and ceremonies are all examples of stakeholders. I have found the collaboratives to be a way to get to know what is taking place in the National Forest.



Sawtooth Mountains,
Magdalena District of the Cibola National Forest

Photo ©Jim McGrath

We in the Albuquerque area are familiar with the Sandia, Mountainair, and Mt. Taylor Ranger Districts – the homes of the Sandia and Manzano Mountains and Mount Taylor. However, we are less familiar with the Magdalena Ranger District.

The Magdalena District is that part of the Cibola National Forest west of Socorro. U.S. Highway 60 bisects the Magdalena District. As you drive west on Highway 60 from Socorro you see the Magdalena Mountains to the south and then the Bear and Gallinas Mountains to the north. Driving further to the west the San Mateo Mountains appear to the south. After passing through the northern part of the Plains of San Agustin, you will arrive at the small community of Datil. Continuing northwest on Highway 60 you will see the Datil Mountains on the north side of the highway and the Crosby Mountains on the south side. Finally, continuing past the Datil Mountains you will find the Sawtooth Mountains adjacent to and on the west side of the Datil Mountains.

I joined the Magdalena Collaborative in part to motivate myself to become more familiar with this part of the Cibola National Forest. In the summer of 2018, I served as a fire lookout at Grassy Lookout in the San Mateo Mountains. From the lookout I could see to the northwest across the Plains of San Agustin. I knew that Davenport Lookout was somewhere in those mountains on the distant horizon. Joe Paez, the lookout at nearby Withington Lookout, would tell me the names of those mountains: the Datils, the Sawtooths, the Crosbys. I could see Sugarloaf Mountain and Alegres Mountain from Grassy Lookout, but the other mountain ranges were hard to distinguish.

I have had a desire to visit the Datil and Sawtooth Mountains for many years, but the two mountain ranges were always just too far off the beaten path for me to visit. Until this year. I made it a point to camp a night in these mountains in late October. I arrived in the Sawtooth Mountains with just enough time to set up my tent before dark. After I awoke the next morning, I realized I had camped in a grove of pinon pines. In fact, I recognized pinon-juniper woodland vegetation as the dominant vegetation type. However, pinon pine accounted for about 95% of the woodland. The pinon-juniper woodland vegetation type is abundant in New Mexico, but where I usually find it, juniper is the dominant component, often comprising nearly 100% of the vegetation type, especially where juniper has invaded native grasslands.



Davenport Lookout in Magdalena Ranger District
Photo © Jim McGrath

As I looked beyond my campsite, I began to understand how the Sawtooth Mountains received their name. The mountain range seemed to consist of numerous small mountains. To the north I could see numerous pointy peaks and across the road to the south was a tall monolithic rock outcrop called Monument Rock. Exposed rock surfaces completely covered the upper two-thirds of a tall mountain to the south with its base clothed in pinon pine forest.

Due to severe drought conditions and the late time of year, there were no flowering plants to draw my attention. I also had limited time, so I packed up my tent and headed toward the Datil Mountains. My initial objective was to pay a visit to Davenport Lookout. Looking at my Magdalena Ranger District map I realized I could make a loop from Highway 60. I could drive north in Davenport Canyon on FR (Forest Road) 6 for 3 miles, then turn right on FR 59 and ascend 2 miles to Davenport Lookout. From the lookout FR 59 descends Thompson Canyon and eventually arrives at Highway 60.

The winds were wicked at Davenport Lookout. The lookout is essentially the same design as Grassy Lookout, where I was stationed 2 years previously. The steps were wooden, not metal as at Grassy. And there was no barrier keeping me from gaining access to the 3-foot-wide catwalk that surrounds the cab with its tall windows that provide the lookout occupant with a view in all directions. The cab, of course, was not occupied as my visit was after the fire season. However, I got some great views from the catwalk – I could see the Sawtooth Mountains and other peaks. But the wind was too much, so I chose to continue my journey down Thompson Canyon to complete my loop back to Highway 60.

Thompson Canyon seemed to get little use by humans. It seemed like a wonderful place to camp, especially if solitude is part of the objective. The Datil Mountains appeared to be consistently clothed in conifer forest, generally lacking the prominent, monolithic rock outcrops and the rock exposed mountaintops characteristic of the Sawtooth Mountains.

Eventually, I nearly had completed my journey back to Highway 60 – some 7 miles from Davenport Lookout – when I encountered a locked gate. I could see Highway 60 from the locked gate, but I was barred from further vehicular travel. I clearly had encountered private property. I knocked on the door of a nearby residence. An elderly woman told me the Forest Service had locked the gate, that the previous landowner had a serious problem with national forest visitors vandalizing their property. A major source of the vandalism, she said, was visitors to the nearby Thompson Canyon Rock Climbing Area, which I had passed a short distance before encountering the locked gate. I complained that there should have been a sign warning me that I could not take FR 59 from Davenport Lookout through Thompson Canyon to Highway 60.

I had to face the reality that I would have to retrace my steps through Thompson and Davenport Canyons back to Highway 60 – 12 miles. The return journey was delightful because the Thompson Canyon is a lovely drive through conifer forest. After I passed Davenport Lookout, I began to look for a sign I might have missed after I had initially turned on to FR 59 on my way to Davenport Lookout. Sure enough, I found such a sign just before I reached the junction of FR 59 and FR 6. The sign was about the size of a highway speed limit sign. It read: “LOCAL TRAFFIC ONLY Locked Gate Several Miles Ahead.” I then remembered seeing the sign on my initial trip to Davenport Lookout. But the sign did not specify how far ahead I would encounter a locked gate. Usually, the Forest Service locks gates during wintertime due to snow and ice conditions. Since it was not winter yet, I had ignored the sign.

Eventually I reached Highway 60 and the small community of Datil. My visit to the Sawtooth and Datil Mountains was over.

Following my trip, I notified my colleagues in the Magdalena Collaborative about my experience with the locked gate. I also contacted the Magdalena Ranger District Office. I complained about the presence of a locked gate on a public road. Tina Cason, who had recently served as the Acting District Ranger in the Magdalena Ranger District, told me that the landowner locked the gate and had prevailed over the Forest Service in court because the Forest Service did not have an easement through the private property.

Communication with collaborative member and rancher Ron Burnett revealed that he spends 20% of his time dealing with access issues on his 22 square mile ranch on the access road to the Sawtooth Mountains. Ron mentioned problems with cut locks and fences and that maps need to be updated so the public knows which roads are open and which are not. Ron also acknowledged that signage is a problem. The sign I had encountered when I began to drive on FR 59 was small and not prominent. It failed to explain that there is no through route to Highway 60. Nor did it indicate why there is a locked gate.

Rancher Ron Burnett and I concluded that the topic of access and signage would be a good topic for the collaborative to address. By gathering opinions and suggestions from collaborative members we can identify and define the problem. Solutions can be proposed and refined. The collaborative can then make well thought out proposals to the Magdalena Ranger District that will hopefully result in action on the ground.



Monument Rock, Sawtooth Mountains, Cibola National Forest

Photo © Jim McGrath

Although this topic is not directly related to native plant conservation, the idea is for me to become a working participant of the Magdalena Collaborative. As I become more familiar with the participants and their concerns, conservation issues will become more apparent. Then, as a representative of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico, I can have influence on decisions that pertain to native plants.

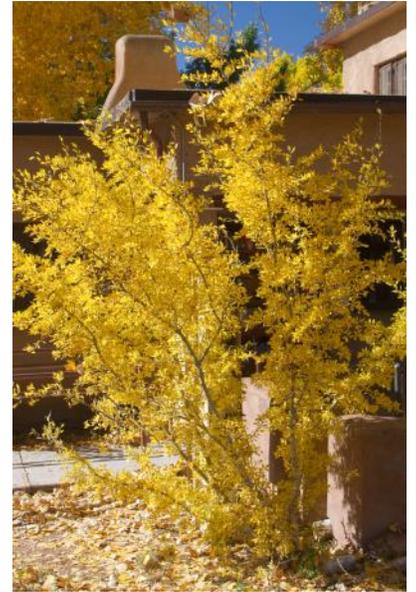
Editor's Note - Conservation includes good communication among interested parties who are willing to risk getting involved. Destructive behavior by a few people affects all of us.

Colorscaping for Autumn Landscapes

Photos & Story by George Miller

Spectacular displays of fall foliage colors usually bring to mind the “big three” trees: cottonwoods, aspens, and bigtooth maples. These large-scale landscape plants are too big, and too thirsty, for many small, water-wise urban yards. This fall, thousands of leaf-peepers crowded Fourth of July canyon in the Manzanos to see crimson maples, and the Santa Fe ski basin to see slopes of golden aspens. But you don’t have to plan a day in the mountains to enjoy spectacular hues of reds, oranges, and burgundies. These four landscape shrubs will deliver the color right in your yard.

New Mexico Olive, *Foresteria pubescens*. (right) This ornate shrub provides three seasons of landscape beauty, as well as being a wildlife super-market plant. Small leaves densely cover the airy branches and turn brilliant lemon-yellow in the fall. In early spring, tiny, nectar-rich flowers delight bees, and in the summer clusters of black, berry-like fruit attract birds. The shrub can be trimmed into a 10-15 foot multi-trunked tree or shaped into a beautiful specimen plant.



Three-leaf Sumac, *Rhus trilobata*. (left) This versatile shrub doesn’t have showy flowers but makes up for it with clusters of scarlet berries in the summer and dense foliage that turns hues of orange and red in the fall. It grows fast and spreads with rhizomes to form thick, rounded, bushes. It can reach 3–8 feet tall and wide, ideal cover for birds, or you can get low-grow cultivars that reach only about 3 feet tall.

Smooth Sumac, *Rhus glabra*. (right) Reaching 10-feet tall and forming colonies in loose soils, this delightful small tree is great for a bird and pollinator garden. Creamy bundles of nectar-rich flowers cover the plant in the spring, followed by dense, red spikes of scarlet berries, loved by birds. Then in the fall, the long, pinnate leaves turn crimson to match the berries, if the birds haven’t eaten them all.



Red-osier Dogwood, *Cornus sericea*. (left) With dense rounded clusters of white flowers in the spring, white, pearl-like fruit by summer, and broad, green leaves that turn shades of yellows and reds in the fall, this plant delights three seasons. But it really performs during the bleak winter months. After the leaves fall, the shrub brightens the landscape with a dense array of deep red stems that can reach 3–8 feet tall.

The Ecology of Herbal Medicine

By Dara Saville

Available for pre-order now, released March 1, 2021

The Ecology of Herbal Medicine introduces botanical medicine through an in-depth exploration of the land, presenting a unique guide to plants found across the American Southwest. An accomplished herbalist and geographer, Dara Saville offers readers an ecological manual for developing relationships with the land and plants in a new theoretical approach to using herbal medicines.

Designed to increase our understanding of plants' rapport with their environment, this trailblazing herbal speaks to our innate connection to place and provides a pathway to understanding the medicinal properties of plants through their ecological relationships. With thirty-nine plant profiles and detailed color photographs, Saville provides an extensive *materia medica* in which she offers practical tools and information alongside inspiration for working with plants in a way that restores our connection to the natural world.

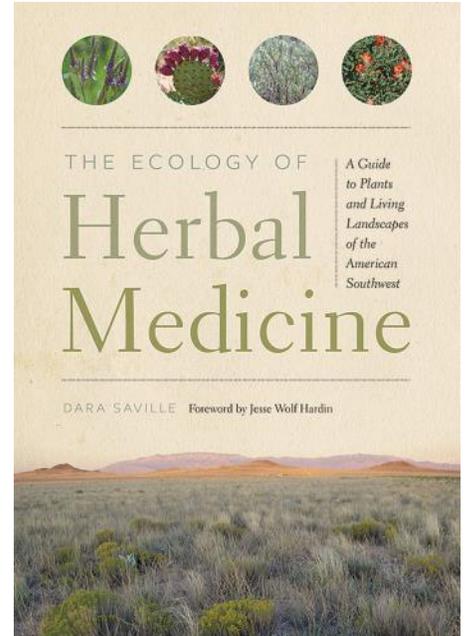
Available for pre-order now, released March 1:

UNM Press: <https://unmpress.com/books/ecology-herbal-medicine/9780826362179>

Bookworks: <https://www.bkwrks.com/book/9780826362179>

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Ecology-Herbal-Medicine-Landscapes-Southwest/dp/0826362176>

Dara's Note: *In writing this book, I wove together personal stories of my connection to plants and place with thoroughly referenced information documenting our understanding of the functions of plants ecologically and their medicinal uses by people. While it includes information pertinent to the western United States, it is highly relevant to those of us familiar with the Rio Grande Valley. Join me for more discussion in a virtual event with Bookworks on March 14 at 3pm.*



ETCETERA

Wow! Chama Peak Land Alliance High Country News infographic

<https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.11/infographic-wildlife-a-patchwork-of-lands-fragments-wildlife-migration>

From Earthweek: Diary of a Changing World, Week ending Friday, December 18, 2020, By Steve Newman

As published in the Albuquerque Journal:

Roman Invasion

Rome's iconic umbrella pine trees are under siege from a tiny insect known as the pine tortoise scale.

Originally from North America, the invasive *Toumeyella parvicornis* has an oval shell that makes it look like a tortoise. It first appeared in Naples to the south five years ago, ravaging that city's stone pines.

Agronomists say it can kill trees within just two or three years by operating like a vampire, sucking sap then coating trees with a fungus that blocks photosynthesis.

They are looking at natural predators to control the infestation since it is not practical to use pesticides in the bustling Italian capital.

"In Europe, our pines have never seen this insect and have no defense mechanism," said entomologist Antonio Garonna.

Native Plant Gardening for Birds, Bees, and Butterflies: Southwest

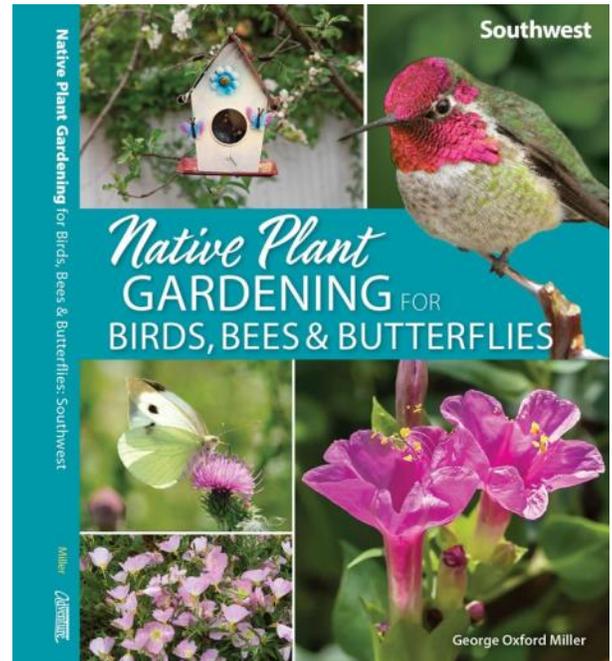
By George Oxford Miller

Publishing date, March 2021

With detailed landscaping information and full-page photographs, this comprehensive garden guide highlights the ornamental qualities of 109 plants native to the Southwest. Organized with sections on desert accents, trees, shrubs, wildflowers, vines, and grasses, the book describes the specific habitat requirements for each species so you can choose plants best suited for your yard.

Chapters and charts describe the pollinators your garden will attract and how to establish a year-round habitat that keeps birds, butterflies, and bees thriving in your yard. We can all repair the environment one yard at a time.

Publishing date March 2021, Adventure Publications.



Contributed by Lee Regan—A great reason to get outside in your yard and in nature!

Fleg, Anthony, 2020. “**Keep yourself moving for health.**” Albuquerque Journal, Dec. 1, 2020, p.A-11 [in a letter to the Albuquerque Journal]:

“The limitations the pandemic places on our normal ways of staying fit are tempting excuses to curl up on the couch and wait until COVID has passed. But this is when we need to keep moving more than ever. Let’s explore briefly the physical, emotional and spiritual benefits of movement and why they are especially important during the pandemic.

Physical: We know that staying active has positive effects on our body, preventing and treating many of the most common chronic health conditions. When many of us, young and old, are more sedentary, doing school and work from the living room, we need to find ways that get us activated, sweating, pushing our body to its limits. Even simple stretching to get the full range of motion out of our limbs is important in our hunched-over-virtual-school/work pandemic living.

Emotional: There is strong data on movement’s ability to relieve stress and create a strong state of emotional health. With the stresses of pandemic living, where all of us live in a trauma-like state, there is no better way to clear the mind than to have time to unplug and sweat ourselves to an emotional reset.

Spiritual: This realm is less talked about and refers to how we connect to the world around us – to each other; to Mother Earth; the elements, the plants and animals and a higher power. The pandemic has challenged much of this connection, and our movement can be a beautifully simple and effective way to restore this connection.

So, keep moving in these next months. Not because it is easy, but because it is needed. Movement is a medicine available to us all, one we need in this stressful time for physical, emotional and spiritual health.”

NEED NEW BOOKS FOR WINTER READING?

Albuquerque Chapter NPSNM Books for sale (new except as noted)

We have native plant books available to purchase. Contact Lee Regan by e-mail with questions:
Inbregan2 [at] gmail.com

Make checks payable to:
NPSNM, Albuquerque

Mail to:
Lee Regan
9187 Coors Blvd. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120

Central New Mexico Gardens; A Native Plant Selection Guide. (Native Plant Society of New Mexico, n.d.). 40p. **\$5**

Chihuahuan Desert Gardens; A Native Plant Selection Guide, ed. by Greg Magee and Tim McKimmie. (Native Plant Society of New Mexico, 1998.). 31p. - **\$5**

The Colors of New Mexico; Native Plant Coloring Book, by Native Plant Society of New Mexico and Institute for Applied Ecology. (2019). [32p.] - **\$10**

Common Southwestern Native Plants; An Identification Guide, 3rd ed., by Jack L. Carter et al. (Colorado Native Plant Society, 2018). 278p. **\$18**

Field Guide to Rocky Mountain Wildflowers; From Northern Arizona and New Mexico to British Columbia, by John J. Craighead et al. (Peterson Field Guide Series, vol.14. Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963). 270p. - **USED, GOOD CONDITON. \$3**

Guide to Plants of the Northern Chihuahuan Desert, by Carolyn Dodson. (UNM Press, 2012). 194p. - **\$20**

Mountain Wildflowers of the Southern Rockies; Revealing Their Natural History, by Carolyn Dodson and William W. Dunmire. (UNM Press, 2007). 174p. - **\$18**

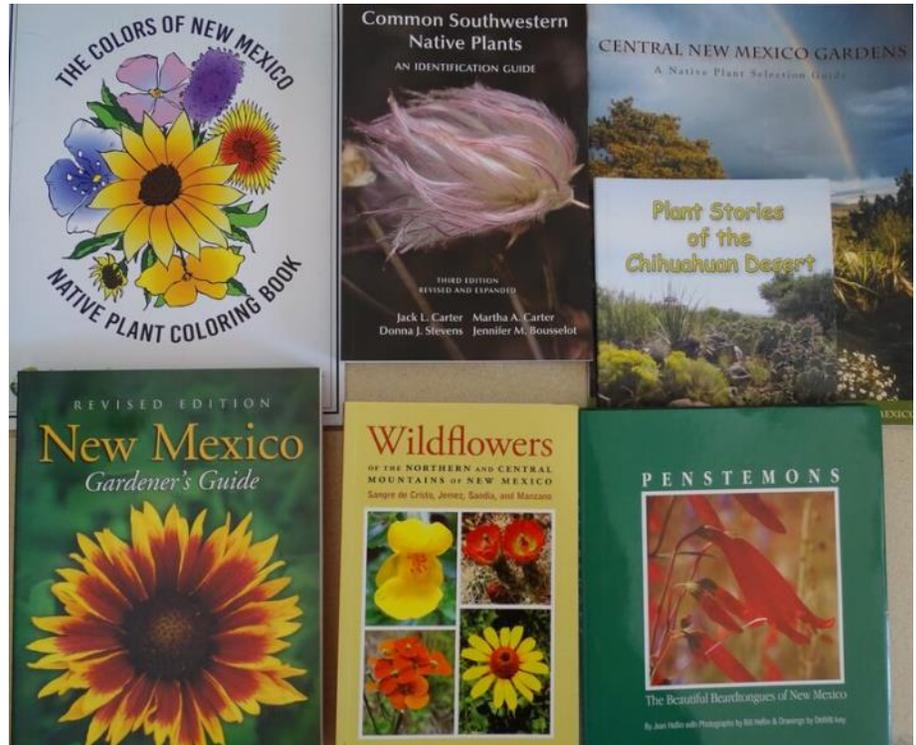
Native Gardening in Northern New Mexico: Taos, Santa Fe, Los Alamos and other NM Highlands, by Sally Wasowski. (Native Plant Society of New Mexico, 2003). 40p. - **\$7.50**

New Mexico Gardener's Guide. Rev. ed., by Judith Phillips. (Cool Spring Press, 2001). 240p. - **\$15**

Penstemons; the Beautiful Beardtongues of New Mexico, by Jean Heflin. (Jack Rabbit Press, 1997). 50p. - **\$5**

Plant Stories of the Chihuahuan Desert, by Tom Hyden. (author, 2018). 47p. **\$3**

Wildflowers of the Northern and Central Mountains of New Mexico: Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, Sandia, and Manzano. by Larry J. Littlefield and Pearl M. Burns. (UNM Press, 2015). 389p. - **\$25**



Helping Local Communities Thrive

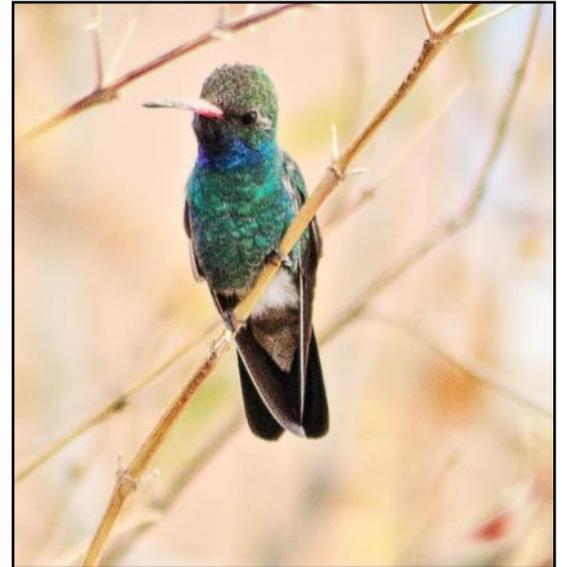
An Interview with Linda Murray of Wild Bird Seed Trading Company Diane Stevenson

Wildflower field trips are an integral part of the Albuquerque Chapter of the Native Plant Society of New Mexico's activities. As we walk slowly along spotting and identifying wildflowers and other blooming flora in nature, we often observe birds close by. Sometimes by sight, but more often by sounds and activity during the season we're out and about. Many regular field trip participants are biologists and avid bird watchers too. I have learned much about the different bird species in the area we traverse. The best thing about our field trips is sharing knowledge between participants.

Many of us have focused more on our home gardens this year, bringing more native and arid-adapted plants into neighborhoods with sterile landscapes containing introduced plants from wetter climates all over the world and lots of gravel used to cover soil. My evolving native and arid-adapted landscape has offered food, shelter and water for an increasing variety of wildlife in my corner of suburbia. I have observed hawks, roadrunners, bush tits, juncos, house finches, doves, scrub jays and other birds. Neighbors and their observant dogs discovered nesting gray foxes and raccoons as well as coyotes; adding to population diversity of our city snuggled up to the Sandia Mountains.

A partner in bringing wildlife into my gardens is Wild Bird Seed Trading Company, a locally-owned shop that also offers wildlife photos and local artisan gifts in addition to seeds for my feathered friends.

I visited recently and asked Linda Murray, the store owner if she would answer a few questions about their business. Here is the result.



Broad-billed Hummingbird
Photo © Linda Murray



Broad-billed Hummingbird
Photo © Linda Murray

Q. What prompted you to open Wild Bird Seed Trading Company?

A. As we approached retirement, we decided to explore our love of gardening, photography, and bird watching by opening the store. We developed our own quality seed blends and gathered products for a variety of birds and birders. We hoped to spread our enthusiasm with others about New Mexico's wildlife and lands, sharing with those we meet through this venture.

Q. How long have you been in business here?

A. Over 6 years. We enjoy birds and wildlife in the city and the east side of the Sandias. Birders are loyal to quality seed and products that may encourage more visitors.

Q. Tell me more about the services and products you offer.

A. We documented the types of seed eaten by our visiting birds and developed our "Bird Approved" blends: Sandia Mountain Blend, Enchantment No Mess Blend, as well as suet, seed cakes & cylinders, and specialty seeds. We have feeders, bird baths, yard accessories and art, photographs, and more.

Q. Can you describe wildlife and/or habitat conservation you participate in through your business activities.

A. Wild Bird Seed Trading Co. has partnered with Rio Grande Nature Center with seed donations. We are working with Wild Life West Nature Park in Edgewood on changes to the birding area for 2021.

A member of the cardinal family, *Pyrrhuloxia* east of the Sandia Mountains on a roadrunner garden art perch

Photo © Linda Murray



Q. Would you like to share a brief story about feeding birds and other wildlife with our native plant enthusiasts?

A. Our two-acre Edgewood home was mostly prairie 14 years ago when we started. We planted native flowering plants, shrubs, and trees, incorporating two moving water features to create a balance of natural food, shade and nesting sites the birds enjoy. We used trees and shrubs that created an oasis; windbreaks and areas of refuge from the high winds and cold winter temperatures on the east mountain prairie.

We planted more natives and established water sources outside our home oasis. The variety of wildflowers brought many birds uncommon through the year: Brown Thrasher, Mockingbird, Broad-billed hummingbird, and our current rare visitor, a *Pyrrhuloxia* (Mr. P for short).

Q. Is there anything else you would like to add?

A. We are glad to have new customers as bird and wildlife caregivers this year because it benefits both the givers and receivers. We are grateful for this opportunity to be there and share in your adventures.

Jim & Linda Murray

Wild Bird Seed Trading Co.

12611 Montgomery Blvd NE, Suite A-8, Albuquerque, NM 87111

www.wildbirdseedtradingco.com

505-503-8568

Current hours: Monday through Saturday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

*"The Gila Native Plant Society is planning, once again, to offer our popular online course: **Landscaping with Native Plants** during the month of February 2021.*

This four-part course will utilize Western New Mexico University's online teaching platform, Canvas. Course cost will be \$25, which includes a copy of our new [Beginner's Guide to Planting Native Perennials of the Gila Region](#). Participants will be able to access the four modules at any times convenient to them. *Participants will learn about the variety of plants (trees, shrubs, vines, herbaceous perennials, cacti, etc...) that can be used to create a landscaped garden or space. *Participants will be introduced to basic principles of landscape design. *Participants will learn how to plant, prune and care for their native plants. *Participants will take a virtual tour of local environments landscaped with native plants.

For information about how to register, or if you have any questions, you can email us at [gilanative \[at\] gmail.com](mailto:gilanative@gmail.com). We will need to have at least eight participants to run the course and we will cut off registration if and when the number of participants reaches twenty-five."

Thank you, Don Graves, President Gila Native Plant Society

gilanps.org

Editors Note: *This online course is tailored for the Silver City area in southern New Mexico where winters are warmer (USDA zones 7b – 8a). Albuquerque participants will need to do homework to determine whether plants will survive our winters.*

According to our NPSNM publication **Central New Mexico Gardens; A Native Plant Selection Guide**, Albuquerque zones are colder (USDA 4 to 7). The publication is available on our website for download:

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

ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO JANUARY - MARCH 2021 ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

Monthly meetings are normally the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm, currently online via Zoom due to the pandemic. Meeting links are distributed to chapter members via e-mail prior to the meeting. For more information on programs and/or registration for an upcoming Zoom meeting, contact Sara Keeney at [skeeney \[at\] swcp.com](mailto:skeeney[at]swcp.com) or or 505-379-3392.

No 2021 field trips are scheduled due to the pandemic until further notice. Plant lists are available for hikes on your own on the Albuquerque Chapter page of our website, <http://www.npsnm.org>

January 6. Meeting: “An Introduction to the Moths of the Gila.” Retired Rice University Biochemist Ron Parry, the “moth man”, summarizes the characteristics of moths in each of eight moth families.

February 3. Meeting: “Natural Heritage New Mexico (NHNM) – an Overview.” Richard Norwood, NHNM Information manager.

March 3. Meeting: “Build it and They Will come: Attracting Wildlife to the Garden.” Wes Brittenham, Farm and Landscape Manager at Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm, describes how native plants can be utilized to create a functioning habitat and pollinator garden.

Articles, photos, and news submissions for the Albuquerque chapter NPSNM Spring 2021 Newsletter should be submitted via e-mail to Diane Stevenson ([dirstevenson331 \[at\] hotmail.com](mailto:dirstevenson331[at]hotmail.com)) by March 21, 2021. Any mistakes you see in this newsletter are mine. *Thank you!*

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

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