

Native Plant Week Listsicles
Las Cruces Chapter, Native Plant Society of New Mexico

EIGHT TOP NATIVE PLANT HIKES IN LAS CRUCES AREA

(Get to know the plants listed below! Enter Native Plant Week drawings at Dripping Springs Visitor Center at Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument and Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park, April 18-24, 2021, for a chance to win Jack Carter's *Trees and Shrubs of New Mexico* or *Chihuahuan Desert Gardens* by Greg Magee and Tim McKimmee!)

- **Dripping Springs at Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument (OMDPNM)**—Over 260 recorded plant species. Look for Arizona oak (*Quercus arizonica*), spotted monkeyflower (*Mimulus guttatus*) and Wright's silk tassel (*Garrya wrightii*)
- **Soledad (Bar) Canyon at OMDPNM**—Over 260 recorded plant species. Look for bigtooth maple (*Acer grandidentatum*) for fall color and hoptree (*Ptelea trifoliata*) for spring bloom near the waterfall.
- **Pine Tree Trail at Aguirre Springs Recreation Area** —Over 230 recorded plant species. Look for alligator juniper (*Juniperus deppeana*) and Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) at higher elevations.
- **Tortugas (A) Mountain Recreation Area**—Over 190 recorded plant species. Look for succulents like ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), Haystack cactus (*Echinocereus stramineus*), soaptree yucca (*Yucca elata*), and claret-cup cactus (*Echinocereus coccineus*) with its scarlet April blooms. If you look carefully, you might be surprised to see ferns, too...
- **Prehistoric Trackways at Prehistoric Trackways National Monument**—Over 180 recorded plant species. Look for flowering shrubs like Apache plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*) and feather dalea (*Dalea formosa*)
- **Picacho Peak Trail at Picacho Peak Recreation Area**—Over 180 recorded plant species. Look for shrubs like little-leaf sumac (*Rhus microphylla*) that bloom in the spring and oreganillo (*Aloysia wrightii*) that bloom in the late fall.
- **Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park**—Over 180 recorded plant species. Look for riparian shade trees cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*) and Goodding's willow (*Salix gooddingii*)
- **North Sierra Vista National Recreational Trail**—Over 90 recorded plant species. Look for banana yucca (*Yucca baccata*), claret-cup cactus (*Echinocereus coccineus*) and sotol (*Dasyliirion wheeleri*) anchoring the dry landscape. Wildflowers are abundant in wetter years.

TOP TEN (No, make that 13) NATIVE PLANTS FOR YOUR LAS CRUCES GARDEN

Trees:

- Honey Mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa var. torreyi*) Large shade tree, bee-pollinated flowers produce pods that can be ground to make a sweet flour, nitrogen-enriching root system
- Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*) Orchid-like flowers, good patio tree, very drought-tolerant

Shrubs:

- Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*) Large shrub with airy flowers, very drought-tolerant, provides good cover for quail and other birds
- Desert Honeysuckle (*Anisicanthus sp.*) Deciduous shrub with flame-orange, nectar-laden flowers attractive to solitary bees and hummingbirds
- Turpentine Bush (*Ericameria laricifolia*) Local variety 'Aguirre Springs' has vivid, late season golden flowers on fresh evergreen foliage

Perennials:

- Penstemons (*Penstemon spp.*) Superb hummingbird plants, grown easily from seed
- Chocolate Flower (*Berlandiera lyrata*) Delicious chocolate aroma from yellow flowers in morning, spreads easily
- Tufted Evening Primrose (*Oenothera caespitosa*) Saucer-sized, four-petalled white flowers bloom at night in spring. Spreads slowly by seed, very drought-tolerant

Succulents:

- Beargrass (*Nolina texana*) Low water-use evergreen, handsome accent plant. Bee and wasp-pollinated
- Candelilla (*Euphorbia antisyphilitica*) Unusual blue-green, fingery stems produce pink flowers in spring. Traditionally harvested for wax, extremely drought-tolerant
- New Mexico Agave (*Agave parryi and varieties*) Blue-green, symmetrically round agave, very attractive in full sun, meadows, and under trees

Grasses:

- Mexican Feathergrass (*Nassella tenuissima*) Shiny green foliage dances in the wind. Short-lived, cool-season grass that reseeds easily
- Muhly (*Muhlenbergia spp.*) Numerous grass species available. Form clumps and provide structure in meadows and under trees