

**NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
**TAOS CHAPTER**  
**2021 Annual Report**

**OFFICERS:**

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Vice President: Kathryn Mayer  
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Treasurer: Jan Martenson

Secretary: vacant

**At-Large Board Member:**

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**At-Large Board Member:**

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**AD HOC COMMITTEES:**

Landscaping – Millicent Rogers Museum:  
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Chapter Rep to State NPS: Jan Martenson

Greenhouse: Kathryn Mayer

Publicity: Board members

Membership: vacant

**\* 2021 Meetings with Speakers \***

*One in-person and two virtual meetings were held via Zoom in 2020. The recording can be seen on our YouTube channel: [tinyurl.com/TaosNPSvideos](https://tinyurl.com/TaosNPSvideos)*

**August 18** “My Covid Year in Flowers” presented by Mary Adams, member of Taos chapter. Mary spent many days in the previous 15 months documenting the flora in her own garden, as well as on hiking trails around Taos.

**September 15** “The Wacky World of Fungus” presented by Dr. Joe Morton of Santa Fe, professor emeritus, West Virginia University,

**October 20** "The Mycorrhizal Symbiosis: Essential to All Life on Earth" presented by Dr. Joe Morton of Santa Fe, professor emeritus, West Virginia University

**\* 2021 Field Trips/Hikes/Workshops \***

Small groups of officers, greenhouse volunteers, and other members took a few hikes on their own to update existing plant lists and collect seeds.

**\* Projects and Public Outreach \***

flora ~ friends ~ fun

**NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
**TAOS CHAPTER**  
**2021 Annual Report**

1. **Greenhouse and native plant sales:** As described in previous reports, we collaborate with the Taos Land Trust (TLT), sharing our greenhouse in Rio Fernando Park (RFP) and the space surrounding it. Under the guidance of Kathryn Mayer, chapter vice-president and Greenhouse Supervisor, a greenhouse work group comprising 6-8 member/volunteers, meets weekly at the greenhouse for various tasks according to the season (seed cleaning, seeding, potting-up, organizing plant sales). We had an issue with watering and germination during the early months of 2021 and did not have as many plants for sale as in previous years, but nonetheless held a sale over Memorial Weekend. Sales of plants, books, notecards, and tattoos on that day and over the summer to drop-in visitors netted over \$1000. Some of the leftover plant stock was donated to and installed in the RFP pollinator gardens.

Those sale proceeds were enough to finance the construction of a winter sowing/hardening-off enclosure added to one end of the greenhouse. It was designed by Bob Pokorney and Kathryn Mayer, who were assisted in the construction by several other members. It is frame construction with chicken-wire walls and roof and a locking exterior door. It can be entered from inside the greenhouse as well through another locking door. We look forward to using it in 2022 for winter sowing and later for hardening off seedlings before sales to the public.

Chapter member Peggy De'Scoville, while interning with the US Forest Service last summer, arranged a digging permit for the greenhouse group in the Amole Canyon Area from July 1 to August 1, 2021. The purpose of the permit was to allow NPS to clear plants in the gravel areas of an unused trail area. Not only did that action limit the proposed herbicide treatment by USFS, it offered the greenhouse group first-hand experience digging and transplanting native plants ranging in size from small tree seedlings to perennial wildflowers. Plants were made available to members for home use, as well as, specimens for the greenhouse which to date have done quite well. These will provide a good start for our proposed Demo Garden near our greenhouse.

2. **Involvement with TCCWMA Working Group:** Chapter member Bob Pokorney, representing our chapter, has participated in monthly virtual meetings of the working group for the Taos County Cooperative Weed Management Area [TCCWMA]. This group was established in 2018 to promote awareness of and develop actions to thwart the proliferation of noxious and invasive species in the county. [Other participants include Town of Taos, Carson National Forest, NMDOT, NM Dept of Agriculture, Taos Soil and Water Conservation District (TSWCD), Southern Methodist University/Taos, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps, Amigos Bravos, Taos Land Trust, BLM, USFS, and private citizen/educators.]

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, TCCWMA hosted a Noxious Weed workshop, comprising a morning Zoom lecture by Dr. Leslie Beck on Taos County's 12 Worst Noxious Weeds, and an afternoon in-person session for weed identification.

**NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO**  
**TAOS CHAPTER**  
**2021 Annual Report**

TCCWMA received a grant from NPSNM in 2020 for creating a coloring book comparing noxious weeds to native plants. Production was delayed by the pandemic shut/slow downs, but was completed this year and 1600 copies were printed in November. Five hundred will be distributed to 5th graders in the spring of 2022 as part of a Noxious Weed Curriculum created by the TSWCD. A Year-End-Report, including a .pdf file of the final booklet, was sent to the NPSNM board. About two dozen copies were given to the Taos chapter.

Bob Pokorney will assume the chairmanship position for Working Group in 2022. Bob played a central role in writing a grant application, recently approved by the New Mexico State Division of Forestry, for the TCCWMA to conduct a three-year invasive plant remediation program at the Taos campus of Southern Methodist University, adjacent to Carson National Forest. The plan calls for the 30-acre site to be seeded with replacement native grasses.

**3. Demonstration Gardens:**

- a. This year the greenhouse committee plans to start a Demonstration Garden near our greenhouse at the Taos Land Trust/Rio Fernando park.
- b. The front and courtyard gardens at Millicent Rogers Museum were cleaned up in the spring, old plantings inventoried, and new wildflowers planted (some purchased, others from our greenhouse). Permanent plant identification signage was installed.
- c. Our small garden in front of Brodsky's Bookstore downtown Taos is no longer available to us to maintain, due to change in ownership of the property.

**4. Annual Meeting in Alamogordo:** Over a dozen Taos chapter members attended the August 2021 conference, the most that had attended a conference (other than in Taos) in at least 15 years.

**5. Collaboration with the Master Naturalist Program in Santa Fe:** In the fall we learned that three women from Taos were participating in the Master Naturalist Program in Santa Fe, primarily by Zoom. They subsequently joined our Chapter. Participants are required to put in a number of volunteer hours to complete their certification (and continue to do so in the future). All the special projects approved for program participants were based in Santa Fe. These three women contacted us about possible sponsorship for projects in Taos and we agreed. Under the guidance of Kathryn Mayer they developed a plan to focus on restoring 1.5 acres at Rio Fernando Park and creating a pollinator habitat. As part of this they learn how to propagate native plants from seed and cuttings at the greenhouse. The project would start by surveying the vegetation currently present, identifying what is thriving and what is not, removing weedy species, and figuring out what species could be added, monitoring how well the restoration attracts different species of pollinators, and how to take care of it all over time. This parcel of land has great potential for ongoing improvement and enjoyment for the public.

**6. Updating of Wasowski's *Northern New Mexico Gardens*:** Thanks to several chapter members, all the text has been re-typed into Word documents and an Excel file has been created listing pollinators for each species in the book. The

**NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO  
TAOS CHAPTER  
2021 Annual Report**

next step is to add this pollinator information in a new section under each species description.

7. **Publicity & Social Media:** One article appeared in the Taos News in August 2021, written by Mary Adams, about her presentation, “My Covid Year in Flowers”. The chapter has a Facebook page, [Native Plant Society New Mexico Taos Chapter](#), to which we post announcements of upcoming events, links to articles of interest, and photographs. We also post meetings on the Taos News Calendar.
8. **A Herbarium** established about 16 years ago by then-NPS members and colleagues (for the serious botanists and students) is housed at the SMU-Fort Burgwin Campus, where it is overseen by Dr. John Ubelaker, SMU professor emeritus and NPSNM/Taos member.

*Submitted by Jan Martenson, President*

