

# NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO *NEWSLETTER*

July/August 1999

Volume XXIV Number 3

## Indian Blanket:

by Betty Allison Cawfield  
reprinted from the Native Plant Society of Texas News 16(4) 1998

*Gaillardia pulchella*, is an erect or sprawling, branching annual 8 to 24 inches tall. Leaves alternate, variable, mostly stalkless; blades oblong to lance-shaped to inversely lance-shaped (oblanceolate), 3/4 to 4 inches long, 1/4 to 3/4 inches wide, untoothed to toothed or lobed, bristly hairy or downy. Flowers both ray and disk types, in showy heads to 3 inches across (often less); ray flowers orange to red with 3-lobed yellow tips; disk flowers numerous, usually dark purple-brown or yellowbrown, densely massed to form a center; flower heads solitary at the tops of long stalks. May to frost, or intermittently throughout the year. Occurs over most of Texas (dense east Texas forests excepted).

Flaunting colors rivaling carnival lights, Indian blanket, shedding any hint of subtlety, boldly flings a cape of flaming hues over fields, prairies, sandy coastal areas and great stretches of Texas roadside. Reaching the peak of its display in mid-spring to early summer, it blooms sporadically thereafter. Often it teams up with various horsemints (*Monarda* spp.), to enhance its extravagant display even further. Each wheel-shaped flower head is a burst of fiery colors varying in intensity, however, usually the ray flowers are orange-red, bordered on the outer edges with a wide or narrow band of yellow. The solid red Indian blanket, lacking entirely the yellow outer ring, is maroon *Gaillardia* (*G. amblyodon*), a sand lover of a much more limited range.

Because it is more plentiful over a larger area of Texas and has a longer bloom period, Indian blanket has been considered by some to be a better choice for state flower than the more limited bluebonnet. Many plants contain the word "Indian" in their common names. The late Roy Bedichek in *Adventures With A Texas Naturalist* has an intriguing chapter on the origins of folk names of plants and birds. In this fascinating book he observes that when naming plants, the early settlers reserved "Indian" for many of the most colorful and beautiful of the species, especially the red-flowering and/or-fruited ones. Thus we have Indian pink (*Silene*), Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja*), Indian currant (*Symphoricarpos*), Indian cherry (*Rhamnus*), etc. His reasoning for the colonists' paying such graceful compliments to the Indians was that it is easy to forgive a former enemy and convert the conflict to pleasant legends once he has been conquered and no longer poses a threat.

Indian blanket is a lazy gardener's delight. This undemanding, forgiving species actually thrives on poverty and neglect, preferring dry, poor but well draining soils, where it forms neat mounds of color, asking little return for long periods of radiant bloom. It is not unusual to see it lapping at the pavement along gravelly highway shoulders. Given well watered, rich soils, the plant tends to sprawl loosely for several feet, looking thin and unattractive. Both seeds and plants are easily available. For best results, sow seeds in fall. Pinching off spent flower heads will prolong the bloom period of this generous re-seeder. *Gaillardia* honors a French botanist; *pulchella* means pretty.

## Mark your Calendar!! NM NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

**"Wetland and Riparian Plant Communities of  
Central New Mexico"**  
August 26- 29, 1999

Plan to attend! Four days of Speakers, Tours, Workshops and Fun. Friday night BBQ at Wildlife West with Cowboy Band and Bird Show; Saturday night Banquet & Speaker. Bring donations of craft items, plants, books etc. for silent auction.

**Meeting to be held at Howard Johnson's Conference Center, 15 Hotel Circle, Albuquerque, NM** (just north of the Eubank exit off I-40 (milemarker 165)).

Participants are responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements.

Accommodations: **Howard Johnson**, (505) 296-4852

Single Room \$49

Double/Triple/Quad, per room \$53

Nearby Facilities: The Owl restaurant, JB's Restaurant

There are two nearby RV Parks, both off Central Ave. At exit 166 from I-40 (call for directions):

**KOA Kampground** at 12400 Skyline Rd. NE, Ph. 296-2729—exit 166, then South 1 block;

and **Best Western** at 12999 Central Ave. NE. Ph. 298-7426—11 spaces. ( Schedule and registration form on pages 12-15)



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Many thanks to Robert Dewitt Ivey for permission to use the wonderful drawings from his book *Flowering Plants of New Mexico*, in our *Newsletter*.

The *Newsletter* is published six times per year by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. The Society is composed of professional and amateur botanists and others with an interest in the flora of New Mexico. Original articles from the *Newsletter* may be reprinted if fully cited to author and attributed to the *Newsletter*.

Membership in the Native Plant Society of New Mexico is open to anyone supporting our goals. We are dedicated to promoting a greater appreciation of native plants and their environment, and to the preservation of endangered species. We encourage the use of suitable native plants in landscaping to preserve the state's unique character and as a water conservation measure. Members benefit from chapter meetings, field trips, publications, plant and seed exchanges, and educational forums. A wide selection of books is available at discount. The society has also produced two New Mexico wildflower posters by artist Niki Threlkeld. Contact our Poster Chair or Book Sales representative for more information. Call chapter contacts for local information.

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**SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE:** Our main address is: NPSNM, POB 5917, Santa Fe NM 87502-5917. See above for membership and newsletter correspondence.

#### Advertising Schedule

Approved advertisements will cost \$50 per year.

#### Membership Fees

Dues are \$12.00 annually for individuals or families. "Friends of the Society" include organizations, businesses, and individuals, whose dues of \$25.00 or more provide support for long range goals. To join us, send your dues to Membership Secretary, NPSNM, POB 5917, Santa Fe, NM 87502-5917

#### Newsletter Contributions

Please direct all contributions for the newsletter to Tim McKimmie, editor. See address below or email to tmckimmi@lib.nmsu.edu

**Deadline for the next newsletter is August 1.**

<b>Book Sales:</b> Lisa Johnston	748-1046
1814 West Currier, Artesia 88210 cityhall@artesia.net	
<b>Poster Chair:</b> Mary Whitmore	454-0683
whitmore@nmhu.campuscw.net	
<b>Associate Editor:</b> Terry Peterson	523-5295
terrywp@zianet.com	

#### CHAPTER CONTACTS

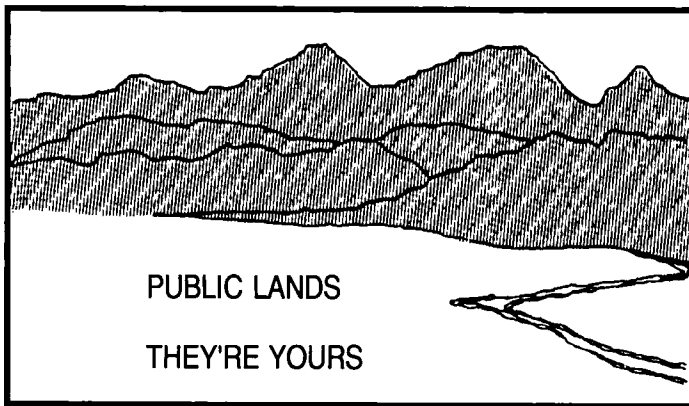
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## Taxonomy Workshop Convenes:

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico will begin holding annual plant **taxonomy workshops on specific areas** or family groupings of the New Mexico flora. The first workshop topic: Sandia Mountain Flora, will be held in Albuquerque at the University of New Mexico Herbarium on July 29 - August 1, 1999. The purpose of this workshop is to offer training in plant taxonomy; especially family recognition and keying plants to species. Participants will learn about the taxonomic literature available to identify New Mexico plants, how to use taxonomic manuals, how to use the UNM Herbarium, and how to properly voucher plant specimens for research herbaria. Subsequent taxonomic workshops will focus on specific plant families such as cacti, grasses, legumes, etc.

This initial workshop will be taught by Dr. Kelly Allred (NMSU professor and author of 'A Field Guide to the Grasses of New Mexico'), Dr. Jack Carter (author of 'Trees and Shrubs of New Mexico'), and Bob Sivinski (botanist for the NM Forestry Division). The first three mornings will consist of field trips into the Sandia Mountains to collect plants. The afternoons and Sunday morning will be devoted to plant identification at the UNM Herbarium. Field trips will not be physically difficult and will occur on established roads and trails.

Come help us document the flora of the Sandia Mountains. The workshop fee is \$30 for NPSNM members and \$40 for non-members (checks payable to NPSNM). This includes field trip transportation and a copy of Martin & Hutchin's 'Sandia Flora'. Plant presses and dissecting scopes will be provided by the UNM Herbarium. Participants will be responsible for their own meals and lodging and should equip themselves with hiking shoes, hat, canteen, and 10X hand lens. Contact Bob Sivinski at (505)827-7865; 144 Cedar, Santa Fe, NM 87501; or <bsivinski@state.nm.us> to reserve your place in this exciting workshop. Space is limited to 30 people, so apply soon.



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## NPSNM Funds at Work

NPSNM supported a Facilitator Training Workshop (Mar 26-29) with a \$1000 grant. The workshop was headquartered at Gray Feathers Lodge, Silver City, New Mexico. The workshop is designed to investigate "Leopold and the Lessons in a Land Ethic" curriculum. In addition, participants are certified to conduct 6-8 hour LEP in-service workshops. The Leopold Education Project (LEP) is an innovative, interdisciplinary educational program based on the classic writings of the renowned conservationist, Aldo Leopold. The LEP was developed to teach the public about humanity's ties to the natural world and to provide leadership in the effort to conserve and protect the earth's natural resources.

In Oxford University Press's 1949 edition of "A Sand County Almanac and Sketches Here and There", Aldo Leopold introduced and integrated three main concepts:

- a) That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology;
- b) That land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics;
- c) That land yields a cultural (aesthetic) harvest.

For more information about LEP, go to <http://www.lep.org>.

### From Silver high School and La Plata Middle School:

Silver City, New Mexico, 29 March, 1999

Dear Dr. Carter,

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to you for the support that you and the Native Plant Society provided the LEP (Leopold Education Project) Facilitator Training Workshop this past weekend. It was highly effective in showing educators how to incorporate the land ethic of Aldo Leopold and respect for the land and its species into their classrooms. This workshop will be a great help to all of us as we raise these issues in the classroom. We highly encourage your continued support for future workshops like this.

### From Robert Usgard of the Leopold Education Project:

April 16, 1999

Dear Jack,

We had an outstanding workshop, March-26-28 at Grey Feathers Lodge. Twenty-nine highly motivated educational professionals from throughout New Mexico participated, most of which knew a great deal about Leopold. Combined with the 50th anniversary of *A Sand County Almanac*, the 75th anniversary of the Gila Wilderness, Richard Bodnar's marvelous presentation, fantastic Dutch-oven cooking, and down-home hospitality of the Grey Feathers staff, the workshop was inspiring, motivating, invigorating, enjoyable and filling. I was very pleased to have been a part of this event. Again, Jack, on behalf of the Leopold Education Project, my sincere thanks to you and the Native Plant Society of New Mexico for your generous support of \$1,000.

From here, the LEP will continue to encourage New Mexico facilitators to spread the land ethic and LEP materials to other educators through local workshops. In doing so, we hope to continue creating and maintaining partnerships. We believe the key to fostering understanding, appreciation and respect for the land is founded at the community level, and takes place both in and outside the classroom. Partnerships not only help to fund programs, they build community. That is why we were so pleased to have the New Mexico Native Plant Society involved with this workshop.



## CALENDAR

### Otero

- July 24 - Joe Duft, Sacramento Lake. Meet at Cloudcroft Forest Service parking lot in Cloudcroft to carpool at 8am.  
 July 31 - John Stockert, (585-2546) 5.5 mile hike in Lucas Canyon.  
 Aug 7 - Linda Barker/Pat(Ranger) Ward, Old Growth Forest. Meet 8am Cloudcroft Forest Service Parking Lot  
 Aug 18-21 Otero County Fair  
 Sept 11 - Dave Anderson, Rhodes Canyon, Bosque Canyon, & Wolf Ranch. Guests Dewitt and Vivian Ivy. Call John Stockert 585-2546, Reservations Required.

### Albuquerque

- Aug 8 - Field trip to the Jemez, Bill Dodson  
 Aug 21 - NPS Albuquerque Chapter Plant Sale 9am-4pm  
 Aug 26-29 New Mexico Native Plant Society's Annual Meet: Howard Johnson Convention Center 15 Hotel Circle NE Albuquerque NM (north of I-40 off Eubank exit) Theme: Wetland and Riparian Plant Communities of New Mexico  
 Sept 2 - Sandra Lynn, Author: Natural history of the sunflower.  
 Sept ? - Field trip to Big Trees, Sandra Lynn  
 Sept 12 - Field trip to El Malpais, Bill Dodson

### Las Cruces

- July 14 - "Blooming Plants" by Jackie Meinecke, reporter and owner of Enchanted Gardens  
 Coordinated by Greg Magee  
 July 18 - Field trip to Gallinas Canyon, Black Range, Meet 7am K-mart/Hwy 70, John Freyermuth & Carolyn Gressitt  
 Aug 11 - Jack Carter, Topic to be announced  
 Coordinated by Tim McKimmie  
 Aug 15 - Field trip to Dripping Springs, Meet 8am, Pan Am John Freyermuth  
 Sept 8 - Thomas K Todson, botanist, "The Orchids of New Mexico", Coordinated by John Freyermuth  
 Sept 12 - Field trip to Valley of Fires State Park, Meet 7am Kmart/Hwy 70, Terry Peterson

### Gila

- July 18 - Meadow Creek, Pinos Altos Mountains. 8:00 WNMU Fine Arts lot.  
 Aug 15 - Gomez Peak north of Silver City. 8:00 WNMU Fine Arts lot.  
 Sept 18-19 - Overnight to Cave Creek, Chiricahua Mountains. 8:00 WNMU Fine Arts lot.  
 Oct 9 or 10 - McKnight Peak for aspen viewing. 8:00 WNMU Fine Arts lot.  
 Deb Swetnam Field trip coordinator - (505) 388-3086 or Martha Carter (505) 388-9221



## CHAPTER REPORTS

### Gila-Martha Carter

The Gila Native Plant Society met in conjunction with the Southwestern New Mexico Audubon chapter for the February 19 meeting. After announcements by the presidents of both organizations, Peter Russell, president of the Southwestern New Mexico Audubon chapter, introduced the speaker, Mr. Bill Miller, president and co-executive director of the Malpai Borderlands Group. Mr. Miller's family homesteaded a ranch in the Bootheel area of southwestern New Mexico. He presented a broad description of the activities and importance of the Malpai Group to the preservation of the land area, its flora and fauna and the ranching way of life for those fifteen ranchers who now belong to the alliance. The Malpai Borderlands Group is a non-profit organization formed in 1994 and based in southeast Arizona and southwest New Mexico. The Malpai Group has a close working relationship with many ranchers, public sector agencies, the Animas Foundation and the Nature Conservancy. The most popular concept of the organization is the "grassbank" in which surplus grassland on one ranch is made available to cattle on ranches that are short of grass. Ranchers who use grassbank privileges sign an agreement which precludes future subdivision of their land. During the drought years of 1996-97, the "grassbank" concept saved three ranchers from bankruptcy by offering an alternative to selling off their cattle or land at low prices.

*Report by Bill Armstrong and Caroline Baldwin*

Ms. Alice Cohen, Gila National Forest Education Specialist and Education Chair for the Gila Native Plant Society, presented the March 19 program with Ms. Jeanne Pierce, fifth grade teacher at San Lorenzo school. Ms. Cohen's presentation included background information on the Gila National Wilderness and the significance of the National Wilderness Preservation System. She gave an update on the Wilderness education efforts and the Anniversary weekend events planned for June 3-6, 1999, celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Gila National Wilderness at the urging of Aldo Leopold. Ms. Cohen has been developing a conservation education program for the Gila National Forest for the past three and one half years. She developed Wilderness Trunks to show educators and others the value of the flora and fauna in the immediate area of the Gila National Forest. Ms. Pierce, is one of the teachers using the New Mexico Wildflower Posters to teach her students plant identification. She showed the notebooks the students use to identify wildflowers in their area east of Silver City on the Mimbres River. The students have developed a natural area on the school grounds to attract birds and other animals. GNPS presented Ms. Pierce with three additional damaged posters and ten plant identification booklets for use with her students. At the social time following the meeting, materials from the Wilderness Trunks assembled by Ms. Cohen were displayed for Society members and guests.

*Report by Caroline Baldwin and Martha Carter*

The first field trip of the Gila Native Plant Society on Sunday, April 18 to Fort Cummings was attended by twenty-three members and guests. Fort Cummings and Butterfield Stage ruins, along with the the post cemetery and Cooke's Spring were as fascinating as the

## Gila Report cont'd

flora. The over whelmingly dominant feature of the area was creosote, *Larrea tridentata*. Also very obvious were Four-wing Saltbush, *Atriplex canescens*; Littleleaf Sumac, *Rhus microphylla*; and Mesquite, *Prosopis glandulosa*. Interspersed in the creosote were a few Cholla, *Opuntia imbricata*; Violet Pricklypear, *Opuntia martiniana*; Mormon Tea, *Ephedra trifurca*; Banana Yucca, *Yucca baccata*; Soap-tree Yucca, *Yucca elata*; and Snakeweed, *Gutierrezia sarothrae*. A few wildflowers were in bloom as conditions were very dry on the gravelly hills surrounding the Fort. Globemallow, *Sphaeralcea* sp., and several "microplants" of white, blue and purple hues and otherwise unidentified. Littleleaf Sumac, *Rhus microphylla*, was densely in flower surrounding the Cooke's Spring, attracting bees and other insects. Due to the grace of underground water provided by the Spring, we were able to see Sacaton Grass, *Sporobolus airoides*; Burrobush, *Hymenoclea monogyra*; and a large Goodding's Willow, *Salix gooddingii*, in this dry environment. During lunch under the willow tree the group caught up on each other's activities during the past winter season and discussed the possibility of exploring the nearby Pony Hills Petroglyphs on a later trip, perhaps in a different season after some moisture has arrived in southern New Mexico.

*Report by Deb Swetnam, Field Trip Chair.*

Bill Davis led the May 16 field trip along Little Cherry Creek and Forest Service Trail 855. The scant amount of moisture along the creek provided 16 members and guests with typical examples of plants of the riparian environment. One of the most eye-catching, as always, was Common Chokecherry, *Prunus virginiana* in flower. Yellow Monkey Flower, *Mimulus guttatus*; Purple Geranium, *Geranium caespitosum*; and a showy Claret Cup Cactus, *Echinocereus triglochidiatus*, quickly caught the attention of the hikers. Three members of the *Quercus* family were noted: Gambel Oak, *Quercus gambelii*; Gray Oak, *Quercus grisea*; and Silverleaf Oak, *Quercus hypoleucoides*. As the elevation and moisture increased, *Quercus gambelii* was more abundant and tree-like and *Quercus grisea* was showing new leaves, having shed last year's growth. This box canyon is truly an example of transition as elevation increases from 5,800 feet to 8,000 feet. Gymnosperms observed were: Alligator Juniper, *Juniperus deppeana*; Ponderosa Pine, *Pinus ponderosa* var. *scopulorum*; Pinon Pine, *Pinus edulis*; and Douglas Fir, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*. Deciduous trees included Box Elder, *Acer negundo*; New Mexico Alder, *Alnus oblongifolia*; Arizona or Velvet Ash, *Fraxinus velutina*; and an introduced form of apple, *Malus pumila*. The dominant tree by far was Narrowleaf Cottonwood, *Populus angustifolia*. Creeping Mahonia, *Mahonia repens*, in flower, extended over one shady, pine needle-covered, northwest facing slope. Other shrubs observed were Birch Leaf Buckthorn, *Frangula betulifolia*, Mountain Mahogany, *Cercocarpus montanus*; False Indigo Bush, *Amorpha fruticosa*; and New Mexico Locust, *Robinia neomexicana*. White Honeysuckle, *Lonicera alba*, and Arizona Grape, *Vitis arizonica*, were the woody vines observed.

*Report by Martha Carter*



## CHAPTER REPORTS

Las Cruces-John Freyermuth, Mar-May

**Chapter meeting** and speaker's program, Wednesday, March 10, 1990: During the short business meeting, it was decided to donate \$100 from the local treasury to Forest Guardians. The \$100 is to be designated for land restoration. Our speaker, Robert (Bob) Gerard, was introduced by Dave Anderson, who said that Bob was born in Wales, moved to Albuquerque as a boy, and then "really dropped off the edge" by settling in Chaparral, New Mexico. Mr. Gerard, author of *Gardening the Arid Land*, worked as an agricultural extensionist and teacher prior to settling on his farm in the natural soil of the Chihuahuan Desert. Here he raises garlic by employing "no till" methods along with cover crops and mulching with organic material, thereby obtaining a higher yield than achieved by traditional plow farming methods. The mulch and cover crops help to loosen the soil, to retain water, to reduce weeds and soil erosion, and to provide nutrients and shade for the garlic plants. Additional organic materials are made available to the perennial garlic plants when the annual cover crops of beneficial weeds, tepary beans and millet die in the winter. Bob said that rainwater is high quality water because it contains no salts and no pollutants. Furthermore, rainwater contains nitrogen in a form that can be used by the plants. Therefore, he collects rainwater from the roof in cisterns and distributes it to his plants in the form of drip irrigation through a series of pipes and hoses. Bob has also been experimenting with various forms of slopes and furrows in order to gain optimum rainwater runoff in the fields. Native plants are left to grow in and around his land in order to help ensure a healthy ecology and attract beneficial natural pollinators.

**Border Book Festival:** On Saturday, March 13, 1999, Las Cruces Chapter members Lisa Mandelkern, Paul Shelford, Terry Peterson, and John Freyermuth manned a table at the trade show of the Border Book Festival, which was held at Court Youth Center. Several copies of *Chihuahuan Desert Gardens* were sold. Additional information and membership brochures were handed out to interested visitors.

**Field Trip,** March 14, 1999: Lisa Mandelkern led 11 individuals on a field trip into Valles Canyon, a tributary of Broad Canyon in the Sierra de las Uvas. This was a return visit to the area visited by our chapter on October 12, 1997. It is interesting to compare the field notes and the seasonal variations of the flora for these two field trips. The plant list for 10-12-97 indicates 44 species in flower, while the list for 3-14-99 gives a total of 24 flowering species. But, only 2 species, *Senecio flaccidus* (threadleaf groundsel) and *Phlox nana* (Santa Fe Phlox) were listed as flowering for both field trips. Upon arriving at the parking area Herb Ruetzel spotted a gray fox scurrying up the slope of the opposite hillside. Near the parking area several interesting small spring flowering plants were noticed. Alice Anderson identified *Allium bigelovii* (Bigelow's onion - flowering white-pink); *Cymopterus multinervatus* (purple nerve spring parsley), a purple-flowering perennial herb of the Apiaceae (parsley family); and pale blue flowering *Eriastrum diffusum* (miniature woolstar), a member of the Polemoniaceae (phlox family). As the group made its way down into Valles Canyon, several examples of a soft and pubescent *Astragalus* species with large showy purplish inflorescences were seen. Soon thereafter, whiteflowering *Neolloydia intertexta* (woven pineapple cactus)



## CHAPTER REPORTS

### Las Cruces cont'd

specimens began to appear quite frequently on the south facing hillside of Tailholt Mountain. We were saddened to see that some of these cacti had been recently disturbed or uprooted or crushed. Three examples of flowering species in the Boraginaceae (forget-me-not family) were seen. There were numerous examples of the small, bluish-white flowering *Lappula redowskii* (stickseed), and of a small, white flowering *Cryptantha* species (catseye). One fine specimen of yellow flowering *Lithospermum incisum* (narrowleaf gromwell) was observed on the downward trek. The open areas were frequently blanketed by large numbers of yellow flowering *Lesquerella gordonii* (Gordon's bladderpod).

After approximately 1.5 miles, Valles Canyon began to narrow and large shrubs became more frequent. Some interesting shrubs seen were *Garrya wrightii* (Wright's silk tassel), *Quercus turbinella* (desert scrub oak), *Rhus trilobata* (lemonade bush sumac), *Celtis laevigata* var. *reticulata* (net-leaf hackberry), and *Berberis haematocarpa* (red barberry). Rolston St. Hilaire remarked on the new, tender reddish growth of one specimen of *Berberis haematocarpa* and compared it with another specimen upon which no new growth had yet appeared. He suggested that this may be due to the fact that one might have received more water than the other. John Freyermuth found one example of a small shrub tentatively identified as *Brickellia oblongifolia* (narrowleaf brickelbush).

Once we had all assembled in a narrow part of the canyon enclosed by rock walls, Lisa Mandelkern suggested we have lunch in the shade of some large shrubs. Here we observed the rock art and conjectured on the possible meanings of the various symbols. After lunch we continued downstream (there was no water) another 100 meters where another gray fox was seen. We turned around here and hiked back up out of the canyon. At the end of the hike, as the group reassembled around the vehicles in the parking area, Alice Anderson identified the grass *Vulpia octoflora* (six weeks fescue). Since "vulpia" is a form of the Latin word for fox, our hike was thereby framed by occurrences of foxes. Perhaps we should not be surprised by these seemingly strange appearances since our field trip was led by artist Lisa Mandelkern. Also, "lisa" is the Russian word for "fox"! Thanks to Lisa and others for making this fox motif possible.

**Field Trip, March 28, 1999:** The Las Cruces chapter's field trip of March 28, 1999 was arranged and led by Greg Magee. Nine travelers crossed into Texas and were met by Wynn Anderson, who gave a wonderful tour of his gardening activities in El Paso. We met Wynn at the Centennial Museum on the UTEP campus, where a series of various Chihuahuan desert habitat gardens are in various stages of completion. This project is undoubtedly the best public demonstration garden for native plants in Far West Texas and South Central New Mexico. The gardens are situated in several beds or plots of varying sizes. Some of the gardens emphasize special habitats. For example, there are beds with sandy soils, grassland habitats, arroyo habitats, running water with small pools, patio environments, and others. John Freyermuth was able to list approximately 100 species for these gardens. These gardens on the beautiful UTEP campus will provide a great educational opportunity for teachers and students of all levels. In addition, they demonstrate a great

variety of possibilities to native plant gardeners. Hopefully, these gardens will stimulate the use of more native plant gardens in public areas, to include other educational institutions, as well. We departed the UTEP campus and caravanned to the home of Wynn and Kym Anderson. There we had a rest and enjoyed the cookies and refreshments that Kym had prepared for us, had lunch and enjoyed the view over Wynn's backyard.

Wynn's home is located on a westward facing incline just beneath the steep western slope of the Franklin Mountains. This contributes to creating a warm microclimate where Wynn has been able to grow many plants which normally grow in slightly warmer regions. For example, we found healthy specimens of *Euphorbia antisiphilitica* (candelilla), *Guaiacum angustifolium* (guayacan), *Acacia rigidula* (blackbrush acacia), and *Anisacanthus puberulus* (pinkie anisacanth) growing here. All of these plants are normally found in the lower areas of Big Bend National Park. An amazing variety and quantity of plants grow in Wynn's garden. In fact, there are over 400 taxa of plants growing in this small area. Most of them are native to some part of the Chihuahuan Desert. Many of the penstemons, such as *Penstemon parryi*, *Penstemon havardii*, *Penstemon superbus*, and *Penstemon pseudospectabilis*, were in bloom. These and many other small flowering plants were attractively planted in the gaps between large rocks on the westward facing incline. We thank Greg Magee for making the necessary arrangements which made this excellent field trip possible.

**Chapter Meeting and speaker's program, April 14, 1999:** At a brief business meeting, Alice Anderson and other state members of NPSNM read and signed a letter dealing with the dispersal of conservation funds from the NPSNM treasury. The letter was sent to NPSNM board member Grace Mason. Terry Peterson presented a proposal for assisting the city of Las Cruces in planting areas adjacent to a bike path near the Rio Grande. Terry suggested that labor for putting in plants might be available from local high school clubs or from NMSU fraternities and sororities. After some discussion, chapter members voted for Terry to continue to look into this matter. The evening's speaker was chapter president, Lisa Mandelkern. Her topic, "Native Plants in Autumn and Winter", was accompanied by stunningly beautiful color slides. Many of our native plants attractively present themselves throughout much of the year. Leaves drop and form delightful patterns upon the ground or colorful stones. Other plants, such as *Rhus* species, soapberrys, legumes, desert willows, and many composites, can be recognized by their fruits, seed pods, or dried flower structures. Trees and large shrubs which hold onto seeds attract birds and wildlife which are active in our region during the fall or winter. Most cacti assume a winter aspect by shrinking or shrivelling in order to protect themselves from sub-freezing temperatures. Lisa showed some interesting slides of cacti blanketed or capped with bright white snow after a brief winter storm. By carefully observing individual plants through the winter, one can learn of subtle behavioral changes which might otherwise be overlooked. For example, *Parkinsonia* will drop its leaflets first and then drop the remaining central rachises. Cottonwoods often hold onto their leaves for much of the winter.

**Field Trip, April 18, 1999:** Terry Peterson led a group of 11 into Achenbach Canyon on the west slopes of the Organ Mountains. Departing from the Pan American Center parking lot on the NMSU campus at 8:15 AM, the group reached the Achenbach Canyon



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trailhead within 20 minutes. Participants were provided with a plant list which had been compiled from several trips to this canyon over the past 4 years. The group hiked east into the canyon for approximately one mile and stopped for lunch near a hill of large rocks close to a pass which offered a view into a southern branch of the canyon. A solar phenomenon known as a sun dog was witnessed by some of the group on the return hike.

Spectacular plants recorded for this field trip were pink flowering Phlox longifolia var. stansburyi (Stansbury's phlox), white flowering Townsendia exscapa (stemless Easter daisy), white flowering Delphinium wootonii (Organ Mountain larkspur), white flowering Mammillaria heyderi (pancake cactus), white flowering Carphochaeta bigelovii (Bigelow's bristlehead), pale green flowering Lycium pallidum (pale wolfberry), white flowering Calycoseris wrightii (white tackstem), yellow flowering Machaeranthera pinnatifida (spiny goldenweed), yellow flowering Malacothrix fendleri (Fendler's desert dandelion), white flowering Melampodium leucanthum (blackfoot daisy), white flowering Rafinesquia neomexicana (desert chicory), pale purple flowering Arabis fendleri (Fendler's rockcress), yellow flowering Lesquerella gordonii (bladderpod), white flowering Lesquerella purpurea (purple bladderpod), white flowering Fendlera rupicola (cliff fendlerbush), magenta flowering Dalea formosa (feather peabush), purple flowering Krameria erecta (sticky range ratany), white flowering Allium drummondii (Drummond's onion), yellow flowering Mentzelia albicaulis (whitestem stickleaf), yellow flowering Mentzelia pumila (desert blazing star or velcro plant), lavender flowering Hibiscus denudatus (naked hibiscus), pink flowering Allionia incarnata (trailing windmills), orange-yellow flowering Eschscholtzia californica sub sp. mexicana (Mexican poppy), white flowering Plantago patagonica (wooly plantain), pale blue flowering Eriastrum diffusum (miniature woolstar), purple-blue flowering Penstemon fendleri (Fendler penstemon), red flowering Castilleja integra (Southwestern paintbrush), pink flowering Glandularia bipinnatifida (Dakota vervain), white flowering Aphanostephus ramosissimus (mesa daisy), and Galium microphyllum (bracted bed straw).

**Earth Day, April 24, 1999:** The year's activities for Earth Day were held in the Las Cruces Downtown Mall. Terry Peterson and Alice Anderson were our chapter's representatives on the City of Las Cruces' Earth Day Planning Committee. Several chapter members volunteered to help at the NPSNM table from mid-morning through mid-afternoon. Information, schedules of local activities and membership applications were distributed to interested visitors. Over 150 native plant seedlings donated by Terry Peterson were given away. These seedlings included Parry's Penstemons, Tahoka Daisies, Ratibidas, Chocolate Flowers, and Gaillardias.

### Field Trip, May 2, 1999:

Terry Peterson led a party of 8 on a field trip to Tonocho Mountain, also known as San Diego Mountain, which is located about 3 miles west of I-25 at a point about 25 miles NNW of Las Cruces. The group travelled in two 4-wheel drive vehicles, which were required for the final 2 miles of the drive.

The walking portion of the trip began at the lower (northern) end of a small canyon and continued up the canyon wash in a southerly direction. We soon crossed a small fault. Randy Gray identified a flammulated owl which we had startled from a small net-leaf hackberry. A little further up we reached a group of large boulders covered with fine examples of Jornada style petroglyphs. Chapter shaman Terry Peterson interpreted the glyphs for the novices. Afterwards we travelled a short distance in the vehicles to the shade of a large net-leaf hackberry tree where the group had lunch.

A Las Cruces chapter field trip to this same area on October 4, 1998 noted 13 flowering plants. But, the trip of May 2, 1999 recorded 27 plants in flower in spite of a long period of dry weather. Those recorded were purple-blue flowering Phacelia sp. (scorpionweed), yellow flowering Mentzelia pumila (desert blazing star or velcro plant), pale yellow flowering Nicotiana trigonophylla (desert tobacco), purple flowering Machaeranthera tenacetifolia (tansy aster or Tahoka daisy), flowering Ephedra trifurca (longleaf ephedra), yellow flowering Baileya multiradiata (desert marigold), white flowering Fallugia paradoxa (Apache plume), flowering lemon yellow Opuntia macrocentra (red joint prickly pear), yellow flowering Bahia absinthifolia var. dealbata (lyreleaf Bahia), white flowering Melampodium leucanthum (blackfoot daisy), white flowering Chamaesyce albomarginata (rattlesnake weed), orange flowering Eschscholtzia mexicana (Mexican poppy), yellow flowering Streptanthus carinatus subsp. carinatus (yellow twistflower), white flowering Rhus microphylla (littleleaf sumac), yellow flowering Lesquerella gordonii (Gordon's bladderpod), white flowering Eriogonum annuum (annual buckwheat), pink flowering Stephanomeria sp. (wire lettuce), yellow flowering Trixis californica (trixis), magenta flowering Dalea formosa (feather peabush), orange flowering Fouquieria splendens (ocotillo), red flowering Echinocereus coccineus (claret cup hedgehog cactus), white flowering Calycoseris wrightii (white tackstem), yellow flowering Opuntia phaeacantha var. discata (Engelmann's prickly pear), orange flowering Sphaeralcea fendleri (Fendler's globemallow), and blue-white flowering Eriastrum diffusum (miniature woolstar).

### Chapter meeting and speaker's program, May 12, 1999:

Lisa Mandelkern, chapter president, conducted a business meeting which preceded the speaker's program. A planning meeting for next year's state meeting was set up for Saturday, June 5, at the Ruetzels' home. Alice Anderson read and commented on a letter from NPSNM Conservation Chair, Grace Mason.

Carolyn Gressitt introduced the evening's speaker, Bruce Calhoun, President of Save the Rainforest and a former high school biology teacher from Wisconsin. Mr. Calhoun currently lives in Las Cruces. The Save the Rainforest organization promotes protection of rainforest habitat through various programs within poor third world countries. It originated from a high school project in the late 1980s. Funding and support for the programs is provided by children in over 20,000 schools world wide. These programs enable children to be educated about the rainforest and involve them in finding solutions. Mr. Calhoun stressed the importance of working with these peoples to preserve their cultures which have coexisted with the local habitats for many years. The funds are also used to lobby governments to set up



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protective parks for these critical habitats so that they will not be cut down by outside farmers or loggers. Funds are also used to purchase critical rainforest habitat, protect wildlife from poachers, and provide environmental education for school children in third world countries. So far, Save the Rainforest has raised over \$15 million. This money goes a lot further in poor third world countries than it would in a wealthy developed country such as the United States. Operating expenses in 1998 accounted for less than 7.5% of Save the Rainforest's total budget. Calhoun spoke of the incredible amount and diversity of species within the rainforest. Many of these species are as yet unknown to science. In one case, a mycologist was able to document a new species of fungus in every square meter of territory that he investigated. Specimens of the same species of trees are often separated by more than a mile. Thus, cross-pollination is dependent upon essential pollinators such as insects, bats, and hummingbirds. Furthermore, he pointed out that rainforest soils are not good for agriculture, which quickly depletes them so that large areas become wastelands. It is virtually impossible to reforest these areas. Loss of rainforest habitat is affecting world climate. Also, many species are lost before they are ever discovered by science. Many of these would have had potential beneficial uses as medicines or chemicals. Another reason why Save the Rainforest programs promote the protection of indigenous cultures is because these cultures know of uses for many of the plants. A forthcoming book will feature 14 of the parks begun by Save the Rainforest. Calhoun supported his enthusiastic talk with several illustrative color slides. Anyone interested in contacting Bruce Calhoun for further information should write to Save the Rainforest, Inc.; Post Office Box 16271; Las Cruces, NM 88004. Or send email to [saverfn@roadrunner.com](mailto:saverfn@roadrunner.com).

#### Field Trip, May 16, 1999:

Carolyn Gressitt and John Freyermuth led a party of 14 on a field trip to Tortugas Mountain, which is located about 3 miles east of the main campus of NMSU. We carpoled to the southwest side of the hill and slowly made our way uphill via a road which goes to the NMSU observatories on top. We often spread out into smaller groups in order to look for cacti and other plants.

Most areas of the small limestone mountain supported diverse healthy populations of cacti. Some of us were looking for examples of flowering *Echinocereus stramineus* (haystack or strawberry hedgehog cactus). A few examples of the brilliant magenta flowers were seen and photographed. Several individuals noticed a patch of hillside covered with the dried dehisced siliques of *Streptanthus* (twistflower), which stood out due to the way they refracted the light of the sun. Other plants in bloom which were especially noticeable included lavender flowering *Hibiscus denudatus* (naked hibiscus), orange red flowering *Fouquieria splendens* (ocotillo), yellow flowering *Psilostrophe tagetina* (paperflower), golden yellow flowering *Acacia neovernicosa* (viscid acacia), brilliant yellow flowering *Opuntia* spp. (prickly pears), white flowering *Rafinesquia neomexicana* (desert chicory), pink flowering *Allionia incarnata* (trailing windmills), pink

flowering *Stephanomeria* sp. (wire lettuce), and a large, nearly-in-bloom *Agave neomexicana* (New Mexico agave).

After returning to the vehicles, most of the group went to the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum for a tour of its native plant garden and other nearby gardens. The tour was given by Rosemary Maddox, who has volunteered a lot of her time in developing a native plant garden for the museum. Rosemary has made signs for most of the plants and has been working hard to minimize damage from rabbits. Some of the plants were acquired as gifts. The latest word is that she is still accepting gifts for the garden. Also, Rosemary would like to hear suggestions from anyone who knows of special requirements such as soil, water, transplanting, etc. for any plants in the garden.

#### Garden Tours and Pot Luck, May 22, 1999:

Approximately 25 individuals toured three gardens of chapter members on the afternoon of Saturday, May 22. One might say the tour started off with a real bang as we were greeted at the home of Terry & Marlene Peterson by a brief thunder and lightning wind-dust-mud storm. However, the trace of rain was not enough to dampen spirits, let alone the ground, and everyone was outdoors looking at the native plant plots within 20 minutes. Terry has put in most of his native plant gardens himself within the past four years. Many of the plants he raises from seed, others he buys or receives as donations from fellow native plant gardeners. While Terry has done more than most would ever dream of accomplishing, he said that he is just getting started! We walked around looking at future areas to be transformed into native plant habitats.

The second leg of the tour was at the home of Lisa & Mark Mandelkern. Over the past few years, Lisa's garden has become well-known among native plant enthusiasts in the Las Cruces area. Her garden has been featured in the local newspapers and for the past several years it has been included on every garden tour promoted by the local chapter. Lisa's garden is always a favorite. In addition, to its perennial beauty and harmony, there is always something new to see there. New plants are carefully added from year to year, while occasionally, older plants are relocated or removed if they are found to present problems. Also, little by little, Lisa is adding new areas to her garden. In several places she has added her creations in the form of artistic mosaics and other objects. Yet, nothing seems out of place in this garden.

The final stop was the home of Will and Virginia Beattie. Like Lisa, Will and Virginia's home has been the site of several recent chapter garden tours. The entrance to their home attractively mixes cacti gardens and flower gardens with native Chihuahuan Desert trees and shrubs. Other areas of the gardens feature various Penstemons, Blue Flax, and other flowers. Will and Virginia continue to add native gardens in the backyard of their home. A recent addition features agaves, yuccas, and various cacti. The patio on the south side of their house is surrounded by flowers and shade. It provided the perfect setting for a wonderful pot luck dinner and a great chance to relax and visit while enjoying the fine food. Our special thanks to Will and Virginia for hosting the pot luck this year. Also thanks to all who offered their beautiful gardens and hospitality for this year's tour.