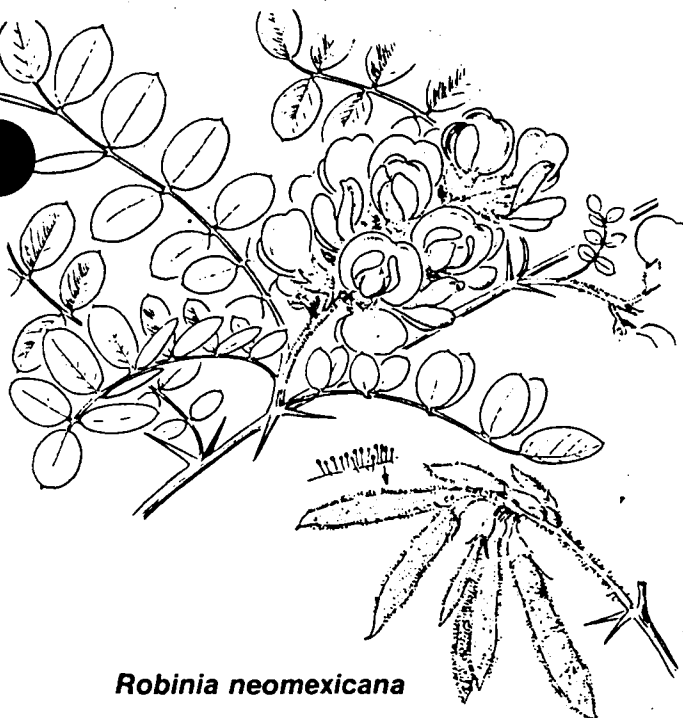


NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO  
May Newsletter, 1978

Missy Deardorff    David Deardorff  
Editor 988-1520    Membership  
988-1520



*Robinia neomexicana*

New-Mexican Locust

This plant is in the pea family,  
the Fabaceae (Leguminosae).  
Turn to page 4 for this issue's  
FAMILY PORTRAIT.

PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 13th  
9:00 - 5:00

Institute of American Indian Arts  
on Cerrillos Road  
Santa Fe

Proceeds from the sale will be  
donated to the Randall Davey  
Botanic Garden and Nature Center.

Volunteers are still needed to  
distribute posters before the sale  
and to generally help out the day  
of the sale. Please call Melissa  
Savage (983-1113) if you can help.

See the enclosed plant list for a  
partial list of plants to be sold.

CHAPTER NEWS

Las Cruces:

The plant sale in Las Cruces on April 15th was a most friendly occasion. The Farmer's Market, filled with baked goods, produce, craftsmen, and other plant people, is a bustling place full of good spirit. There was a great deal of interest in native plants for gardens and landscaping.

The sale grossed \$564.92; the Las Cruces chapter made \$84.75. The reason the gross is almost seven times the net is that the plant material was bought at commercial nurseries far from Las Cruces - from Denver and Phoenix. If the Native Plant Society members from Las Cruces could grow and collect the plant material for their next sale, virtually all the money made could go to the Society.

Carol Dimeff, organizer of the sale, certainly hopes to repeat the sale next year; and, if there is enthusiasm for it, to have another plant sale this year - in July. But July is not far off, and that means organizing it now. Seed of native plants is available from Carol, but some people will want to collect seed of their favorites (our native poppy will have ripe seed soon). Permits are needed for plant collecting on public land or permission from private landowners, but no permits are needed for seed collecting.

Carol also hosted a most fun and delicious pot luck dinner (plant people are such fine chefs!) and a slide show. The Las Cruces chapter had a light-hearted and lively beginning!

Santa Fe:

The big event for May is the Plant Sale May 13th. Please see the announcement on page one for details and the enclosed list of plants available.

May 24th, Wednesday, Henry Carey of the John Muir Institute will speak on Forest Ecology. The meeting will be held at St. John's College, lab 118 of the Laboratory Building. Those attending will plan a follow-up field trip with Henry Carey for some weekend in June. The meeting will begin at 7:30 pm.

June 21st, Wednesday, Terry Fox of Bandelier National Monument will speak on plant succession following the 1977 La Mesa fire in Bandelier.

Albuquerque:

On May 8th, Saturday, Ralph A. Fisher, Jr., one of our members from Silver City, will present a slide show to the New Mexico Wildflower Association. The show will be Wildflowers of Albuquerque, and the meeting will be held at St. Thomas Church. Call Judy Nickell (842-2377 or 256-0769) for details.

## FIELD TRIPS

May 20 - Sitting Bull Falls

We will join Bill Isaacs for a look at this incredibly unique floristic area west of Carlsbad. Take the highway 137 turnoff to the southwest before you reach Carlsbad. Sitting Bull Falls is about 28 miles in on highway 137. The trail is actually a sidewalk with handrails and is not strenuous. Bring a lunch and water. Officially camping is not permitted at the Falls any longer. Self-sufficient campers will be able to find suitable camp sites and those who wish more comfort can stay in Carlsbad or Artesia.

May 28 - Tent Rocks

We will see point-leaf manzanita and alligator juniper as well as annuals and perennials in bloom at this spot west of Santa Fe near Cochiti Pueblo. The Santa Fe contingent will meet in Furr's parking lot on Cordova Road and St. Francis Drive and will depart at 9:30 am. Bring a lunch and water as well as plant keys and hand lenses. The hiking is easy below the rocks.

June 24 - The Cooks Range and Silver City area:

We will leave Bear Mountain Guest Ranch with Myra McCormick at 8:00 am Saturday for the 80 mile drive to see Arizona cypress in New Mexico and numerous other plants in flower. High-clearance vehicles can make the drive in to the cypress stand, but others must park four miles away and hike in on the rocky road or ride in with Myra in her VW bus. Make your own reservations at the Ranch (see classified ad). There is camping for self-sufficient campers in the Gila National Forest a few miles from the Ranch or at campgrounds up Highway 15, about 16 miles from the Ranch. Bring a lunch.

To be scheduled - Forest ecology fieldtrip with Henry Carey.

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEWS AND NOTES

Booklets for Sale:

Due to an unexpected cost increase, the booklet Native Plants for Landscaping in Southern New Mexico will be available for \$.75 at 1404 Cerro Gordo Road, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501. Please add \$.25 postage. Note the address change. also, Native Plants for Landscaping in Northern New Mexico is still \$.50. Please send \$.14 postage with your request to 1404 Cerro Gordo Road.

Tussock Moth Control:

The Forest Service is scheduled to spray LA county forests with chemicals and a virus to control tussock moth destruction of conifers. But before they do, some locals are taking matters into their own hands, or rather, MOUTHS. R. Behnke reported in his column "Spin-off" (April 24, New Mexican) that the first Los Alamos Moth Eating Contest will be held May 12th. Any NPS members who enter are requested to report the results to the editor for publication in the June newsletter. Only live moths are acceptable fodder for contestants.

Sunset Magazine:

Southwest residents read about the Native Plant Society of New Mexico in the April issue (page 310).

Roadside Wildflowers from the SCS:

At least a dozen state highway departments are ready to line roadsides with indigenous forbs, says the U.S. Soil Conservation Service(SCS). Instead of miles and miles of grass, motorists will soon see colorful blossoms. In a future issue the NPS newsletter will report on whether or not the New Mexico Highway Department is taking advantage of the available seed mixtures.

Pinyon-packing Nutcrackers:

Those of you who attended the conifer identification workshop will remember with a smile Roger Peterson's claim that the Clark's nutcracker could carry 95 pinyon nuts in his mouth and still fly from the pine woodlands back to his home in the mixed conifer forests. Here is the truth and the reference: "Use of a sublingual pouch allows the nutcracker to carry up to 95 pinyon pine seeds per trip (average is 55). A pouch full of seeds may be carried as far as 22 kilometers from the collecting area ... to communal caches ..." Vander Wal and Balda, 1977. Ecological Monographs, 47(1):89.

Dog Canyon Field Trip:

Several NPS members from Las Cruces and Los Alamos joined Bill Isaacs and his College of Santa Fe class for a field trip to Dog Canyon in the Sacramento Mountains near Alamogordo on April 22nd. They found forty species of native plants in flower or fruit. Epipactis gigantea (giant helleborine orchid), Perityle staurophylla, Aquilegia chrysantha, Penstemon alamoensis, and four species of the cactus genus Echinocereus are some of their "finds."

\* \* \* \* \*

To join the Native Plant Society of New Mexico send your annual dues to 542 Camino del Monte Sol, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. Send \$6.00 for individual and \$8.00 for family membership.



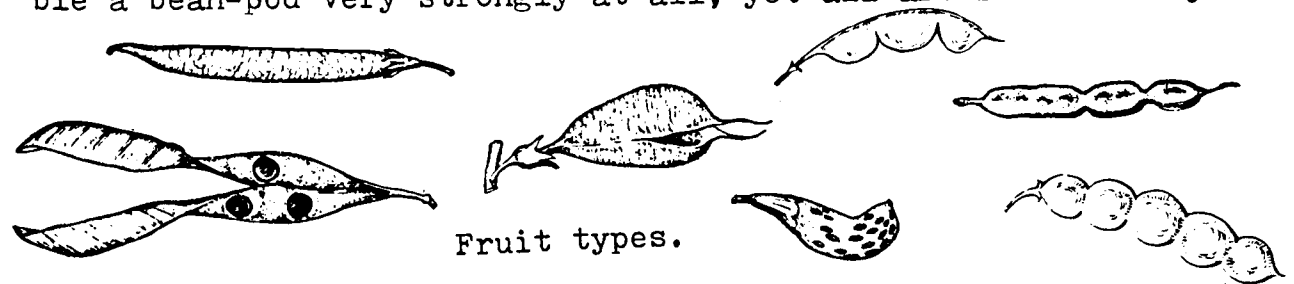
FAMILY PORTRAIT

Fabaceae (Leguminosae)

The Pea Family

Several members of one of the largest plant families in the world, the Fabaceae, are coming into bloom now across our state. Feather dalea or Indigobush, Dalea formosa, is in full bloom along the highways of southern New Mexico, and Mesquite, Prosopis glandulosa, was seen in bloom on the field trip to Dog Canyon (see News and Notes). Some of the locoweeds, Astragalus and Oxytropis species, are now in bloom along the roadsides of northern New Mexico. Many other representatives of this large and important family, such as Cassia (Senna), Lupinus (Bluebonnet, Lupine), Mimosa, Acacia, Caesalpinia (Poinciana), Sophora (Mescal Bean) and Calliandra (Fairy Duster) also occur in our state for a total of 42 genera and 242 resident species.

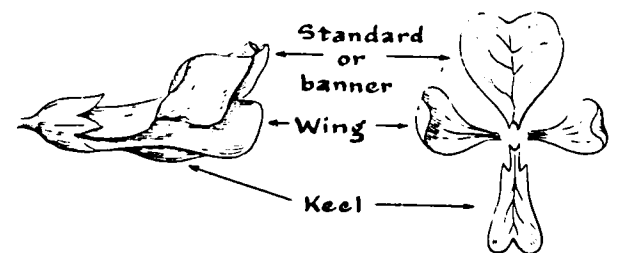
Those who are familiar with the flowers of Senna, Lupine, and Mimosa, might wonder how plants with such very different flowers could have been placed in the same family. It is because they all bear a special kind of fruit called a legume, the familiar "bean-pod." These fruits may be highly specialized and may not resemble a bean-pod very strongly at all, yet all are structurally simi-



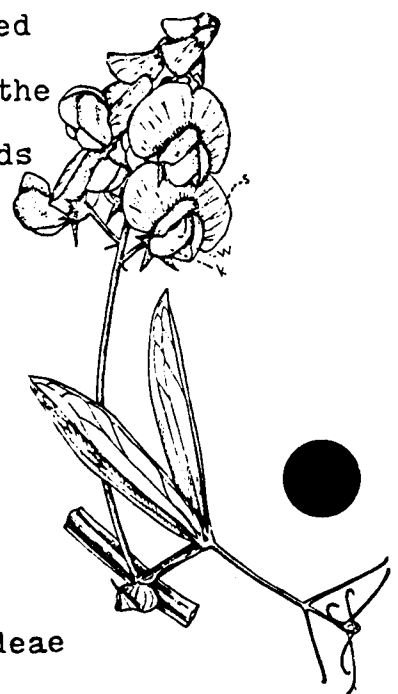
lar and considered to be legumes (simple fruits dehiscing on both sutures and derived from a simple pistil).

The family is easily divided into three well-marked groups as follows:

1. Faboideae(Papilionoideae) - This is the largest of the three groups and includes sweet peas, beans, clover, alfalfa, bluebonnets, mescal bean, locust, and locoweeds among many others. These species all have the familiar "butterfly (papilio)-like" flower with its large upper petal (the banner), two side petals (the wings), and two, fused lower petals (the keel).



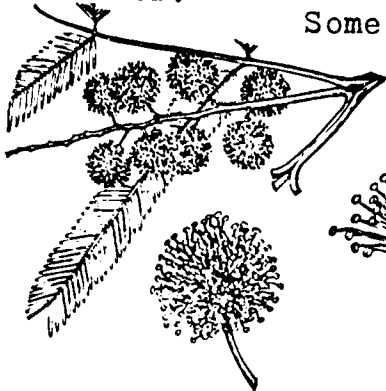
Parts of a papilionaceous corolla.



Faboideae

2. Mimosoideae - The species of this group have "powderpuff" flowers in which the petals are barely visible. The flowers are often showy, however, because they have masses of long stamens which may be brightly colored. Albizia (Silk-tree), Mimosa, Acacia, Fairy Duster, and Mesquite are all included in this group.

3. Caesalpinoideae - This last group includes Senna, Palo Verde, Redbud, Honeylocust, and Bird-of-Paradise -- species which have flowers with five showy petals that are all separate from each other.

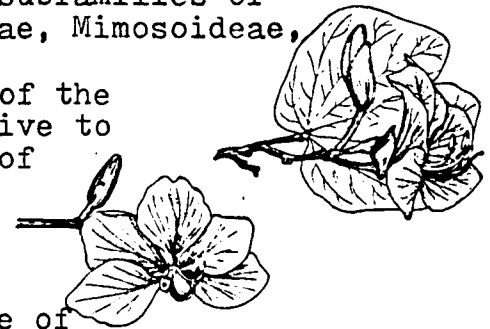


Mimosoideae

Some taxonomists, arguing that the readily apparent floral differences are more important than the similarity of fruit type, recognize each of the three groups described above as separate families (Fabaceae, Mimosaceae, Caesalpinaceae).

More conservative taxonomists recognize the same three groups as subfamilies of the Fabaceae (Faboideae, Mimosoideae, Caesalpinoideae).

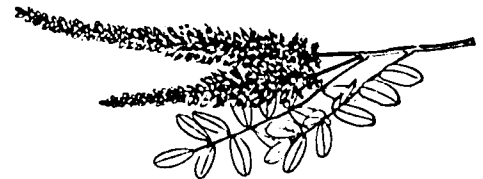
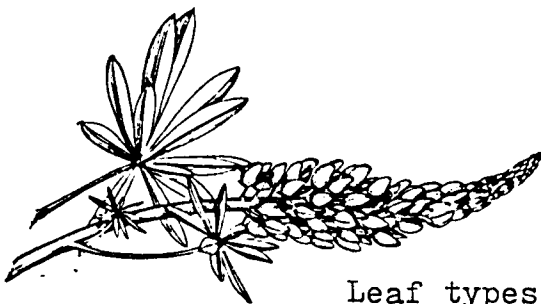
Species of each of the three subfamilies are native to New Mexico, and they are of diverse habit; that is, they may be trees, shrubs, or wildflowers.



Caesalpinoideae

Field trips to any area of the state are likely to turn up at least one representative of this family, from arctic-alpine Lupines to desert Acacias. The family is complex and not easily described but it does "hang together" as a natural unit which is fairly readily recognized in the field. The leaves are almost always pinnately compound (feather-like) or digitately compound (as in Lupines), alternate, and usually have stipules (wing-like appendages at the leaf base).

Many members of this family are extremely important economically for their protein and oil rich seeds (beans, peanuts, soybeans) and their ability to improve the soil in which they grow



Leaf types.

through nitrogen fixation. (These plants harbour bacteria in specialized nodules on their roots and the bacteria "fix" nitrogen, one of the essential nutrients, from the atmosphere into a form which is soluble in water and thus made available to the plants.) Many other members of this family are important ornamentals, including some of our New Mexico natives such as Sophora secundiflora, Acacia farnesiana, and Cercis canadensis. Other members of this family are important because they are weeds or are poisonous, or both - like some locoweeds.

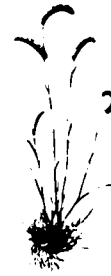
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