

# NEWSLETTER

MAY / JUNE 1990

VOLUME XV NUMBER 3

## CALENDAR

### ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER

- May 2, Wed., 7:30 - Museum of Albuquerque, Program to be announced  
May 6, Sun., 9 am - Meet at Johnson Gym for FIELD TRIP to Mesa Gardens in Belen and Desert Moon Nursery in Veguita  
June 6, Wed., 7:30 - Museum of Albuquerque, Program to be announced  
Call Terry Garwood 242-8620 for additional information

### GILA CHAPTER

- May 19, Sat., 10 am - FIELD TRIP to Purgatory Canyon near Lake Roberts.  
Leader: Gloria Moya 388-3455  
May 24, Thurs., 7 pm - Miller Library AV Dept.  
RALPH FISHER - "Surprise Slides"  
June 24, Sun., 8 am - FIELD TRIP - Bursum Rd. State Rte. 78 from near Alma through Mogollon to Snow Lake  
Leader: Deb Swetnam 388-3086  
June 28, Thurs., 7 pm - Miller Library AV Dept.  
BOB O'KEEFE - Desert Gardening

### SANTA FE CHAPTER

- May 5, Sat., 10:00 - 2:00 PLANT SALE - Sambusco Market Center.  
Gene Loring in charge - 988-4805. Come to contribute, to sell, to buy, to clean up!  
May 13, Sun., 8:30 am - FIELD TRIP - PERA parking lot. 2-3 mile wildflower walk. Don Lowrie in charge - 473-7849  
May 26, Sat., 8:30 am - FIELD TRIP - PERA parking lot.  
Don Lowrie in charge - 473-7849  
June 27, Wed., 8:30 am - FIELD TRIP - PERA parking lot. Moderate hike to Lake Peak for Tundra flowers  
Leader: Carolyn Keskulla 982-9570

### LAS CRUCES CHAPTER

- May 6, Sun., - FIELD TRIP to Black Crater - Meet at Pan Am Bldg. North Lot.  
June 10, Sun., FIELD TRIP to Spring Canyon - Meet at Pan Am Bldg. North Lot. For more information, call Sandy Anderson 523-5179

### OTERO CHAPTER

- May 12, Sat., - PLANT SALE - Garden Center, 10th & Oregon across from the Alamogordo Public Library - 9:00 - 1:00 pm.  
Everyone help! Lucille Wilson in Charge  
June 30, Sat., FIELD TRIP, 10 am La Luz Park, Paul Gordon will lead a trip in the Canyon. Bring a lunch.

EVERYONE - PLAN A HEAD

June 2 & 3 - Seminar with panels and FIELD TRIP on Grazing Management cosponsored by Extension Service, Forest Service, Sierra Club, Cattlemen's Association and others. Call 1-757-6121 for more info.

Sept. 14, 15, 16 - STATE MEETING

FRIDAY POTLUCK by Otero members at the home of Carol Beckett near Tularosa

Saturday FIELD TRIP in Sacramento Mountains with Paul Gordon and Charlie Pace

Late afternoon BOARD MEETING

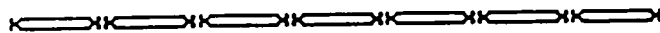
Evening DR. RICHARD SPELLENBERG

Sunday - members' gardens in Alamogordo, La Luz and Cottonwood Canyon.

Lunch at the Wilson's

Details and places to stay will be in the next two newsletters.

Nov. 17 & 18 - BOSQUE DEL APACHE FALL FESTIVAL - A beautiful time to visit and see the progress our plantings are making. The Bosque staff would welcome anyone who would like to help prepare information brochures or with ideas to contribute to make the Festival even more exciting and interesting. 835-1828



The following are the new officers of the Las Cruces Chapter:

Chairman-Melanie Florence  
Rt. 1 Box 711  
La Mesa, NM 88044  
525-3529

Program Chairman-Tom Wooten  
5840 N. Main  
Las Cruces, NM 88001  
522-0050

Field Trip Coordinator-  
Sandy Anderson  
P. O. Box 411 UPB  
Las Cruces, NM 88003  
523-5179

Treasurer-Louie Meissner  
Box 7313  
Las Cruces, NM 88006  
522-7601

Telephone Tree-Laura Stacy  
1901 Brimlow  
Las Cruces, NM 88001  
522-0880

NM-NPS Liaison (contact person)  
Sylvie Peale  
4327 Winchester Rd.  
Las Cruces, NM 88001  
522-2957

Refreshment coordinator &  
Newspaper Contact-  
Bob Reeves  
475 La Colonia  
Las Cruces, NM 88005  
523-1806

Don't forget!

Erma Pilz (296-7254) and Jean Heflin (291-0489) need help in finding penstemons for a field guide:

- P. albidus - eastern New Mexico
- P. breviculus - San Juan County
- P. dasyphyllus - Hidalgo and Luna Counties
- P. deaverii - Mogollon Mts.
- P. lanceolatus - the "bootheel"
- P. lentus - San Juan County

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## Native Plant Collection

Tom Wooten

In order to have a more "instant" landscape, many people seek very large specimens of some of our native plants. These plants are almost always collected from the wild. Do it yourself projects or dealing with professional collectors can be satisfactory. Dealing with illegal collectors may be quite expensive and frustrating. Frequently, collected plants may be diseased or infested with damaging insects. If your plant fails and it was acquired illegally do not count on finding any recourse against the seller. You very likely will be out a substantial amount of money.

There is no restriction on non-commercial collection of native plants from private land, with the landowner's permission, except for plants listed as Threatened and Endangered by the US Government or by the State of New Mexico. Lists of the protected plants may be obtained from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87103 for federally listed plants and Natural Resources Dept. Villagra Building, Suite 129, Santa Fe, NM 87503, for state listed plants.

Plants may be collected for commercial purposes also with the permission of the landowner, but in addition, the State of New Mexico, through the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, requires a collector to have a collector's permit, an authorization permit signed by the landowner or a bill of sale from US Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management, and NMDA tags for each collected plant. Tags should be on collected plants during the interval from initial digging, through sale and transplanting. As a potential buyer then, herein lies your first tip as to the legitimacy of the seller. Texas and Arizona have different rules that may not require tags, but sellers still need

to have a New Mexico dealer's permit. Commercial nurseries are not required to keep tags on the plants but should have bills of sale indicating the source of the plants.

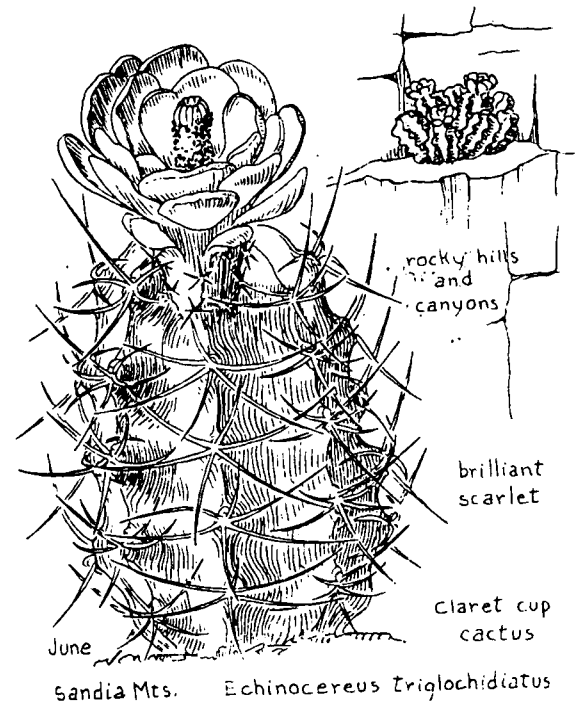
The US Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management offer plants for sale both to commercial and non commercial applicants at a very nominal charge. They do restrict the areas where collection is permitted. Commercial collectors still need to have the State permit, authorization, and tags noted above.

### Action to Take

If you observe an apparent collector removing plants from the wild, observe license number and make and color of vehicle being used if possible. Do not endanger yourself. Notify the landowner if known, if unknown call either the US Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management, (525-8228 in Las Cruces), and report your observation. If after normal working hours call 1-800-neighbor. This reaches an interagency switchboard which will receive your report.

All of us have an interest in improper removal of our native plants because of the scar and vacuum this leaves. Dealing with uncaring and unscrupulous people can be very expensive.

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# CHAPTER REPORTS

## Albuquerque

We had no meeting in March due to several public hearings in town, but we made up in April for anything we might have missed.

Greg Smith, Horticulturist with the Rio Grande Zoo, shared with us his experiences from a trip to Baja California. He showed us great slides of seals sunning themselves on beaches, Ospreys sitting on huge turretlike nests and whales sporting in the deep water.

Greg also gave us a lively account of the plant life on this barren land, cacti with lichen growing on them, an elephant tree snaking up a hillside like an enormous python, cedar trees that get a critical amount of their water from frequent fogs. And we also saw pictures of an island almost completely stripped of all vegetation by feral burros, surely a distressing sight.

It was an informative and enjoyable evening.

Walter Graf

## Las Cruces

Our March field trip (March 11) was to the Dona Ana Mountains. In spite of gray overcast skies and a chill wind, a sizeable group gathered at the Pan Am parking lot at 9 am to car pool. I was glad my friend's car had four-wheel drive, since the road up the mountain became "challenging". However, when we arrived the sun was out and the sky was blue (still chilly, though). For some of us it was a first, and we all enjoyed clambering over rocks while looking at plants. Below is a list of what we found:

Wright Silktassel (*Garrya wrightii*),  
Greythorn (*Condalia obtusifolia*),  
Squawbush sumac (*Rhus trilobata*)  
one in bloom, Juniper (*Juniperus*

*monosperma*), Shrub oak (*Quercus turbinella*), Spanish dagger (*Yucca baccata*), Sotol (*Dasyliirion wheeleri*), Hackberry (*Celtis reticulata*), Four Wing Saltbush (*Atriplex canescens*), Turpentine bush (*Happlopappus laricifolius*), Ocotillo (*Fouquieria splendens*), Cloak Fern (*Notholaena standleyi*), Lip Fern (*Cheilanthes* sp.)

At our March meeting, new member Laura Stacey treated us to a program of slides taken while she was associated with the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. They were beautiful, and her commentary was very informative.

The following field trips were planned:

April 8 - Soledad Rocks  
June 10 - Spring Canyon  
Aug. 4-5 Gila Overnight  
May 6 - Black Crater  
July 8 - Cloudcroft

Sylvie Peale

Otero

2-24-90

The trip from Alamogordo to the Jones Ranch at Cornudas took us through miles of grasslands with a sprinkling of chollas and yuccas. Occasional pockets of very small creosote bushes, ocotillas, and some white ratany-Kraemeria grayi-were a change of scenery... As we came closer to our destination separate mountains stood out on the horizon and we could see the wonderfully heaped up, enormous boulders similar to the formation at Hueco Tanks. We spent the day walking around these formations with Pat Jones and her daughter, Michelle.

They met us at this astonishing rock formation and told us about the history of the area, including the small graveyard we passed as we turned off the road. Like Hueco Tanks this was a stopping off place for shelter and shade in the openings formed by the rocks plus the possibility of water. The Butterfield Overland

Stage passed through from 1858-1860. We saw a number of petroglyphs including one that looked like a bull's eye with its white and black rings. Pat said this was a sign for water.

A semi-circle of planks and benches under a grove of trees at the base of the rocks are used for 4th of July gatherings and made a perfect spot for listening to Pat, lunch, etc. Although we saw nothing in bloom, we saw soapberry trees, Wright's silktassel (*Garrya wrightii*) small mulberry trees, spiny bushes of both the *Condalia lycoides* and *spatulata* plus *Algerita trifoliata*. A large chokecherry grew in a sheltered place in the rocks where you could look up and see a very large buck-eye growing apparently right out of the rocks.

Tucked under a huge boulder was a fern with curled up brown leaves. A short distance away was the same fern uncurled and completely green-saw both the *Cheilanthes* and the *Pellaea*. Pat pointed out to us an oak and a grape vine living together. The grape vine was already large in 1908 and today is still well and bearing fruit. You have to look for quite awhile to figure out whether you are looking at the grape vine or the oak, they are so intertwined.

We enjoyed having a member from Ft. Stockton, Texas, bring a friend and join us. Our many thanks to the Jones family for their hospitality and to C. J. & Joy Carter for making all the arrangements for the trip. Hated to tell Joy that as soon as we were let loose to go home on our own we got lost for awhile! However we did see some wonderful yuccas growing straight and tall at the road's edge while we were lost.

The Otero Chapter took its first trip to the Cox Ranch on March 31, 1990. Last year the Nature Conservancy purchased 2,852 acres from the Cox family and later exchanged the land with the BLM. Staff Naturalist, Katie Skaggs, gave us some background information before we left the visitor's center, which used to be the old Cox family home. The first remnants of buildings we saw on the trail were again part of the Butterfield stage stops. Further on were some of the walls of the Dripping Springs Resort or VanPatten's Mountain Camp. At one time it had 16 rooms, a large dining room and concert hall.

You cannot imagine, sitting there, how anyone could manage to get a grand piano and chandeliers up to that particular spot! This place was our lunch break-a wonderful place to admire the grandeur of the scenery. On three sides rose mighty rock walls. Col. VanPatten was married to a Piro Indian woman whose friends and relatives did an enormous amount of very impressive stonework in various sites in this area.

Dripping Springs was sold to Dr. Nathan Boyd whose wife had contracted tuberculosis so Dr. Boyd built a sanatorium near the Dripping Springs resort along with a private home for himself and his wife. A variety of non-native plants were brought into this area and have long since become well established. The vinca is especially being watched by the staff. Next to a beautiful pond was an imported elm tree.

Compared to the flats of Alamogordo, very little was in bloom. Along the trail we saw lots of turpentine bushes *Haplopappus laricifolius*, Mormon tea, chokecherry, Wright's silktassel, Net leaf Hackberry, and *Acacia constricta*. The squaw bushes were blooming (*Rhus trilobata*). Lichens on many of the large rocks were extremely interesting. A small ground hugging plant, *Lotus humistratus* was growing at the top of St. Augustine Pass, along the roadside, and along the trail at the ranch.

DROUGHT TOLERANT & NATIVE  
LANDSCAPE ORNAMENTALS



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Dock was beginning to bloom, roughly in the same area. Although we were told the mustards were coming out, we saw only a white flowered one along the trail. Saw just one clump of pink phlox, too, which was identified for us later by Katie Skaggs as Phlox stansburyi.

Although the Dripping Springs were barely dripping, we were told that during a rainy spell they are quite spectacular. You can see the black path of the water as it comes down the face of the rocks. Monkey flowers Mimulus and yellow columbines bloom at the springs later on.

This is a place to go back to at different times of the year to see the plants changing with the season. It is well worth seeing at any time, blossoms or no, for the sheer beauty of the place.

### Silver City

On Sunday, March 11th we enjoyed a half day field trip to Granite Gap, which is a narrow pass through the Peloncillo Mountains about thirty-five miles southwest of Lordsburg. The annual javelina hunt had just concluded at the end of February, so the area was quiet; although, there was plenty of evidence (javelina body parts, and shrubs and cacti torn up by vehicles) to indicate a lot of hunters had been in the area. We hiked up to a low saddle and proceeded down to an arroyo that empties into the San Simon valley to the west. The rock formations (which can't be seen from the highway) are similar to those seen in Texas Canyon along Interstate 10 east of Benson, Arizona. The property is BLM, so of course there is a lot of grazing activity in the area. While nothing was in bloom, we saw some interesting plant material. There is Ocotillo, Agave palmeri, and along with many other cacti, we saw Opuntia kleiniae and leptocaulis. Along the arroyo there is Rhus and occasionally Celtis and Condalia. Above the arroyo, the most dominant plants are Acacia greggii and Acacia constricta. Bob O'Keefe

At our March 29th meeting our program was about herbs, given by local member Elisabeth Simon. Libby brought in, literally, a table full of samples from her collection. Some were native like the Chuchupate or Osha Ligusticum porteri. Note: Be careful not to confuse this high (9,000 ft. and above) growing member of the Umbelliferae family with other similar but poisonous members of the same family, which grow at lower elevations. Other herbs were more common varieties such as mints, oregano and various thymes. It was a delight to smell them all (one at a thyme of course!) as they were passed around the room. Many thanks, Libby, for a very informative program.

Ron Flemke

### Santa Fe

"The deed is done," reported Tom Wolf, former development director of The Nature Conservancy, when he spoke to the Santa Fe Chapter in February. The "deed" is the purchase of the long sought after Gray Ranch in southwestern New Mexico. In his most interesting presentation he told us that now, after The Nature Conservancy has obtained this valuable property, decisions must be made as to just how it should be utilized and what group is most appropriate to manage it. He requested any suggestions we might have. Protection and preservation come at a price, which probably preclude the Conservancy handling it alone. Covering a transition zone between northern and southern ecosystems and ranging in elevation from 4000 ft. to 8500 ft., the 500 square mile ranch area provides an unusually valuable range of habitats for wildlife and plantlife. Even though the area has been grazed for a century the grasslands are in good condition and are of particular interest. A recent fire burned a large area of grassland and spread up canyons taking trees and shrubs. The recuperation from the fire is also of interest. Flora and fauna surveys are not recent as the last owner prohibited entry; however the area is

considered to be rich in the number of species in each kingdom, and includes rare ones.

Dorris Tendall

Ben Haggard was the guest speaker for our March meeting and presented some excellent ideas for landscaping and planting. He is a landscape designer and member of the Permaculture Drylands Institute of Northern New Mexico. He explained the use of gabions and swales, french drains and other erosion control devices that have been utilized for centuries, stressing that controlling little rivulets will solve or prevent larger erosion problems.

He also described "Guilds" or mutually beneficial associations of plants, animals and insects, and how to use "sheet mulching."

More information on Permaculture practices and techniques may be obtained from the Permaculture Institute at Jemez House, 982-2063 or by writing Permaculture Drylands Institute, P. O. Box 1812, Santa Fe, NM 87504.

Workshops are held frequently. One on gabions is scheduled for May 12.

Those not daunted by a heavy snow shower on April 18 enjoyed a very instructive program by Diane Macfarlane and Pete Taschl of the Pecos Ranger Station of the Santa Fe National Forest. Diane spoke first about the importance of maintaining not just species by themselves but biological diversity that includes the environment, all species in it and the factors that create a strong genetic pool. An example was of a Florida Kite that feeds only on a certain slug. If the habitat of the slug is destroyed, not only the slug is lost, but the Kite also. She emphasized that we don't begin to know all the interactions that take place in the environment and what the potential loss from destruction of a single species might be.

She pointed out that soil is the basic determining factor in what plant community exists in a given area and this in turn determines what animals, birds and insects will survive there. This led into Pete's slides which illustrated the effects of different grazing practices on Rowe Mesa. He felt that allowing many animals to graze for very short periods of time maintained the rangeland in the best condition with more variety of grasses and forbs. Pete and Diane will lead a field trip on Rowe Mesa August 11. Pete also pointed out that if it becomes uneconomic for ranchers to stay in business, large acreages are frequently broken up into smaller "ranchettes" which are stocked with horses that overgraze and dogs that drive away the natural wildlife.

Ellen Wilde

## BEAR MOUNTAIN GUEST RANCH

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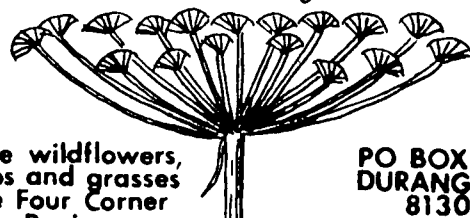
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With this issue, I am turning over the position of Editor to my friend Aurora Sanchez, who has been my trusty typist for several past issues. She is an ardent gardener and conservationist, as well as a very organized and proficient person with superior secretarial skills. I know the Newsletter will improve under her care.

Please continue to send in your news, advertisements, chapter reports, calendar items, book reports, articles. The deadline will be June 11 for the next issue. Address them to Editor-NMNPS, P. O. Box 5917, Santa Fe, NM 87502. Aurora's phone number is 984-1769 if you need to discuss anything with her.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper for the first time--another small step toward conservation. Many small steps will make a big difference. Are you taking steps in that direction?

Thanks to all of you who have helped me get the newsletter out for a year now and a special note of thanks to Jean Heflin, membership secretary, and to Michelle Jespersen, who keeps the membership list on the computer at the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center, and, despite computer failures and glitches, gets the mailing labels out in zip-code order so the mailing can go through.

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico is a great organization!

Thanks, everyone!

Ellen

Join the Native Plant Society of New Mexico if you are not already a member! Send dues of \$8.00 for an individual or a couple or \$25.00 for a sustaining membership to Jean Heflin, Membership Secretary, 443 Live Oak Loop, Albuquerque N. M. 87122..



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