

# GILA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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January 2017

Vol 7 No 1

Helen Shoup, Editor

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## Bulletin 2017: Quarter 1

This quarterly Bulletin of the Gila Native Plant Society of Silver City, New Mexico, provides the latest communications between the society and the members.

It is delivered via your email unless you request otherwise. The online version allows color photos and for a lower cost (essentially free for GNPS). The Bulletin will continue to be available on the [GNPS website](#).

***Important note:*** Much of this information in this Bulletin came from Betty Spence, the GNPS person who manages all the publicity for the club. Our hats are off to her for all her hard (and highly successful) work!

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## Programs for This Quarter

All programs are free and open to the public. Meetings are usually the third Friday of the month at 7:00 pm at WNMU's Harlan Hall from September through April, unless otherwise specified. Refreshments follow the program.

Activity updates and further details are posted on the [website](#). You will also receive an email reminder before the date of each meeting.

The Gila Native Plant Society is committed

- To promote education, research, and appreciation of the native flora of the Southwest
- To encourage the preservation of rare and endangered plant species
- To support the use of suitable native plants in landscaping

For information on programs, publications, and membership, please visit [www.gilanps.org](http://www.gilanps.org).

## January Meeting

**When:** Friday, January 20, 2017

**Program:** Botany at Western New Mexico University: Greenhouse, Herbarium, and Landscape Projects in the 21st Century

**Presenters:** Kristi Dunn, Nathan Martin, William Norris, and Chala Werber

**Description:** Botanical projects galore are moving forward at Western New Mexico University!

- These projects include campus landscaping that utilize native trees and shrubs while incorporating basic water harvesting principles and other sustainable practices.
- On to the WNMU greenhouse, which is undergoing a major structural renovation and plant collection overhaul to support university biology courses while providing a green showcase for visiting public school children.
- Finally, “traditional botany” is alive and well in the WNMU herbarium where university students gather each fall to learn principles of plant identification and which is the base camp for botanical researchers who are

studying the floras of local natural areas, New Mexico mosses and sedges, and the potential use of native grasses as crop plants in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## February Meeting

**When:** Friday, February 17, 2017

**Program:** We Need a Bigger Boat

**Presenter:** Kathy Whiteman, PhD, Director of the WNMU Outdoor Program

**Description:** <http://outdoor.wnmu.edu>

## March Meeting

**When:** Friday, March 17, 2017

**Program:** Farming Gila Region Food Plants: Recipes, Tasting, and Reality for Global Sustainability

**Presenters:** Richard Felger, Gabriel Feldman, Chelsea Rittchen, and Adrienne Booth

**Description:** Come enjoy New Crops taste treats while we share what we have learned for actual farming of native food crops: in agriculture, community gardens, and your front yard. Fields of big sacaton and Apache redgrass enclosed in multi-species food-plant hedge-rows. “Grass as tall as a horse’s belly” is big sacaton -- it can be a major economic crop, right here, right now, as we set the model for sustainable food resiliency.

And put these additional meetings on your calendar:

## April Meeting

**When:** Friday, April 21, 2017

**Program:** Characteristics of Oklahoma's Induced Earthquakes

**Presenter:** Corrie Neighbors, PhD, Assistant Professor of Geology at WNMU

**Description:** Dr. Neighbors will speak on recent research regarding the characteristics of earthquakes induced by oil and gas activities in Oklahoma. Numerical modeling of the 2011 M5.7 aftershock sequence shows lower than

average stress releases for these induced earthquakes compared to typical tectonic events that occur in this region. These results have implications for the seismic risk and intensity of ground shaking from these man-made events.

## May Meeting

**When:** Friday, May 19, 2017

**Program:** STEM, Citizen Science, and the Safford BLM Rare Plant Program:  
How a Two-Year Community College Provides Critical Information and Support to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

**Presenter:** Joneen (Jony) Cockman, PhD, BLM Biologist

**Description:** Dr. Jony Cockman has been working with New Mexico and Arizona flora since 1984. She is currently immersed in riparian habit ecological assessment and restoration work in Eastern Arizona with BLM and is assisted by interns from Eastern Arizona College (EAC).

She will discuss:

- The grass roots relationship between EAC and BLM and the role of Citizen Science
- The plant communities and stressors on the resources
- The joy of hiking and kayaking into wilderness areas with 20-year-olds

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## The Native Plant Sale Is Coming!

Every year, the Gila Native Plant Society offers native plants for sale so you can pick up whatever you are looking for to go in your yard. This year, the Plant Pre-Sale, when you order what you want, will be in March with pickup scheduled for April 21, 2017. Watch for more specific information coming your way soon!

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## Silva Creek Botanical Garden Report

By Elroy Limmer, Garden Chairman

### **The New Fence**

On Sunday, October 16, 2016, ten hardworking members installed a new decorative fence along Virginia Street. It's a great strong fence, as seen in the photo to the right.



Denise Fredrick had welded the panels earlier, and we were all appreciative to George Farmer for bringing in his tractor and auger. It was hard work, and it took from 8 AM until 4 PM to complete, but we completed the project in one day. Everyone was very tired, but it was wonderful to see the teamwork that existed.

Outside bids were \$7000.00, and thanks to all the volunteers, we installed it for just over \$2000.00. A big debt of gratitude to all that worked on the project! Hopefully, we can get it painted this spring.

### **The New Arch**

Member Eric Oekerhousen was teaching a welding class for WILL and asked if we needed an arch for the garden, since he thought the class would like such a project. The next thing I knew, Eric said that it was ready to be installed. And here it is (right) on the south side of the garden. It looks great and is a wonderful addition to the garden. Thanks to all involved.



### **New Botanical Garden Board**

In November, the SCBG advisory board was formed to oversee the work and direct the activities of the garden.

**Members:** (listed alphabetically) Richard Felger, Angela Flanders, Ron Groves, Betsy Kaido, Elroy Limmer, and Keller Suberkropp

**First meeting:** Held November 9, 2016, and included a discussion of the next 2 topics

## **New Mission Statement**

A mission statement for the Silva Creek Botanical Garden was discussed and submitted to the GNPS board for approval:

The Silva Creek Botanical Garden promotes knowledge and stewardship of Native Plants of the Gila Region of New Mexico.

It was approved at the December GNPS Board meeting.

## **Goals for 2017**

The goals set for the new year, considering funding and budget for 2017, are:

- More power tools to make work easier for the volunteers
- The construction and installation of a major artwork by Denise Fredrick
- Removal of a few non-native plants  
*Note:* All new plantings are to be submitted to the advisory board before planting.
- More good mulch to be acquired to reduce work activity and conserve moisture
- A new brochure promoting the garden and directions to it

We are looking forward to a great 2017.

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## **Tricia Hurley's Classes for Children**

Tricia Hurley of Lone Mountain Natives knows a great deal about plants, and she is also adept at sharing that knowledge with children. That is why the Gila Native Plant Society sponsored her in giving a series of 10 presentations over the course of 2016 to school classes, girl scout troops, and children enrolled in the Silver City Recreation Center summer program.

Since the plan is to get children out of doors and looking closely at their natural surroundings, Ms. Hurley has taken her groups to the Gila Native Plant Society's Silva Creek Botanical Garden on North Virginia Street or to the nature trails at the

Silver City Recreation Center.

In her presentations, she teaches the children:

- The difference between native and non-native plants
- The importance of plants
- How plants make their own food
- How all animals – including people – depend on them
- Observations of and all about pollinators (in the summer sessions)

But flowers, of course, were no longer in evidence on December 12, when Ms. Hurley took Ms. Love's fifth grade class at José Barrios Elementary School to the Silva Creek Garden for an outdoor workshop on native plants. Leaves and seeds, however, were abundant. The fifth-graders observed the differences in shrubs and ground covers, grasses, and succulents.

After learning the proper etiquette for specimen collection, they collected leaves from canyon penstemon, autumn sage, and Mexican elder, among others, and made herbarium sheets. They also collected seeds from Apache plume, chamisa, little bluestem, fernbush, and Arizona cypress, and they learned about how seeds are made and dispersed and their importance as food.

As is evident from the photos below (taken by Dennis Switzer, husband of Betty Spence), the young participants became deeply absorbed in their research.





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## Programs from Last Quarter

A description of the programs from last quarter follow:

### October Meeting

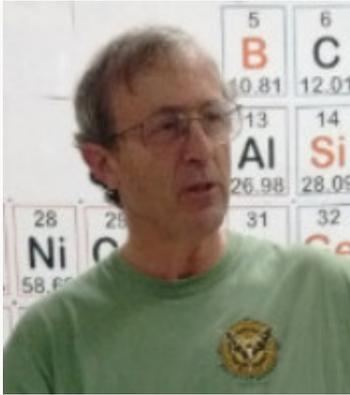
On Friday, October 21, 2016, Dr. Russ Kleinman reviewed his moss projects including his searches for mosses and liverworts on ancient sea ledges, in deep rocky canyons, in lava flows, ice caves, and other challenging places mosses may hide. Dr. Kleinman shared the difficulties and excitement experienced while looking for mosses and liverworts in some of the toughest landscapes in New Mexico. His talk included a fascinating slide show.

Pictures below:

Top: Carlsbad Caverns Yucca Mesa

Bottom: Moss at the mouth of the lava tube at El Malpais National Monument





**Presenter:** Russ Kleinman, PhD, is an associate botanist at Western New Mexico University. He has taught the Plant Taxonomy Class and Lab and enjoys taking the students out in nature to locate and identify native plants. His specialty has been searching for mosses and liverworts, about which he spoke at the meeting.

## November Meeting

On Friday, November 18, 2016, Ann Hedlund, cultural anthropologist, and Hosana Eilert, weaver, presented the program “Creative Coloring: Dye Plants That Grow in the Greater Gila Region.” Because this program interested both botany lovers and those who engage in or appreciate the fabric arts, the turnout was unusually large.

The roots, bark, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits of more than several dozen regional plants can produce long-lasting and vibrant colors when properly applied to sheep’s wool fibers and basketry materials. Some of these dye plants were once used in the American Southwest by pre-Columbian as well as Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache peoples.

In their presentation, Dr. Hudlund and Ms. Eilert discussed Gila regional plants that could be developed for natural dyeing, the processing of plant parts, application of mordants and dyes, and resulting colors that might be expected.

### About the speakers:

- Ann Lane Hedlund (below left) moved to Silver City after retiring from the University of Arizona a few years ago; she is still affiliated with the Arizona State Museum in Tucson. Dr. Hedlund is a cultural anthropologist who works with living (and some past) artists, especially Navajo and Pueblo weavers. The author of many books and articles, she consults widely with museums on their textile collections. She is also an avid native plant gardener and hiker.

- Hosana Eilert (below right) owns and operates the Wild West Weaving Gallery in downtown Silver City, where she showcases her own woven art, features exhibits of other fiber artists' work, and restores and mounts textiles for collectors. Ms. Eilert teaches classes in dyeing, spinning, and weaving in the traditional Rio Grande style. She grew up in the Espanola area, where she apprenticed with Lisa and Irvin Trujillo of Chimayo.



Ann Lane Hedlund and Hosana Eilert

### December Meeting: Holiday Party

On Sunday, December 11, 2016, GNPS had the holiday party at the Volunteer Center of Grant County in Silver City. GNPS supplied the meat and drinks, and everyone else brought the side dishes. There was quite a selection. Everyone had a great time!

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### New Members

We had some new members join this quarter:

\* Karen Reed

\* **Leanne Bartlett**

\* **Beth Leuck**

**We all welcome these folks to the chapter!**

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**Our mailing address is:**

PO Box 457

Silver City, NM 88062

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