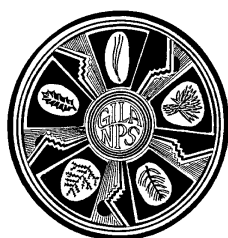


GILA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO



BULLETIN

OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2013

Editor: Charles Holmes

PROGRAMS

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, with refreshments following the program.

Activity updates and further details will be posted on our website www.gilanps.org. You will also receive an email reminder before the date of each program.

Friday, October 18th at 7:00 pm, room 110 of Harlan Hall—Patrick Alexander will give a presentation on Gypsophilla: An Introduction to Gypsum and the Plants That Call It Home.

Patrick will talk about what it is, where it is, why it has weird plants growing on it, and he will introduce a few of the plants found only on gypsum – including a new species discovered about a month ago.

Patrick is a Hoosier from Bloomington, Indiana, living in Las Cruces.
(cont.)

2.

He received his PhD in plant taxonomy from New Mexico State University in 2011 and has taught botany courses at NMSU, worked as a range technician with the Jornada Experimental Range and is presently the curator of the Department of Biology Herbarium at NMSU. He is also a photographer, amateur herpetologist, dabbler in entomology and geology, general purpose outdoor wanderer and enthusiast of the biodiversity and landscapes of the southwest.

On Friday, November 15th, at 7:00 pm, room 110 of Harlan Hall-Donna Stevens will talk to us about Alien Plant Invasion.

Do you know how many aliens have landed in the Gila National Forest? Her program will provide the results of a three-year inventory of invasive plants in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness area.

Donna is the Director of the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance and coauthor, with Jack and Martha Carter, of Common Southwestern Native Plants. She was also formerly a President of our Gila Native Plant Society.

In lieu of a program in December, the Gila Native Plant Society will hold its annual, **potluck Christmas party. You may need at least a month to plan for what you will be bringing AND to get ready for all the frivolity.**

The date and location of this event are yet to be determined, but we will give you plenty of notice in advance.

3.

A N N O U N C E M E N T S

There are no special announcements for this quarter. However, we want to extend special thanks for those of you who volunteered to conduct our annual Native Plant Sale for 2014.

R E P O R T S

On Friday, September 13th, Richard Felger told us a lot about how to Fit The Crop to the Land, Not the Land to the Crop.

He started by explaining that there are over 1,500 species of plants in the Gila National Forest. Of these 250 to 300 species can be used as food.

One of his focuses was on grass species which are easily grown and easily harvested to yield large quantities of seeds, but the grasses often yield small seeds, in some cases too small for some producers to find them to be worth the effort unless they are to be produced on a very large scale. Also, some of the grass seeds do not taste very good, at least to some consumers. A special importance was placed on the major difference between annuals and perennials: the perennials do NOT require tillage, which is good news for the soil.

The next emphasis was on legumes. Dr. Felger emphasized that grasses and legumes could support the world's need for food. One of his main emphases was on mesquite, with which we are well acquainted. Another was on tepary, a native bean in our area that has been grown by the native peoples since pre-Columbian times. It is more drought-resistant than the common beans and is grown in desert and semi-desert conditions.

4.

On Sunday, July 21st, twelve avid plant seekers headed to Gold Gulch Spring, southeast of Jack's Peak.

We were seeking native plants from an area that we rarely visit (because the road is so bad). Fortunately we were accompanied by a host of our experts because we encountered quite a few species that most of us could not begin to identify.

We were led, at first, to a bristling shrub that you should keep at a distance: *Koeberlinia spinosa* (Crown of Thorns). Not too far away we came upon large numbers of *Croton texensis* (Texas Croton). There were also many, many examples of *Asclepias subverticillata*, Poison Milkweed.

Here is one, I'll bet, you rarely encounter: *Eleocharis macrostachya* (Pale Spikerush), a perennial spikerush found at water's edge. When we came upon a small marsh, we found it heavily invested with Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*), an exotic. I thought it might be our native *Mentha arvensis*, but no luck! Two other plants of particular interest were *Rhynchosia senna* (Rosary Bean) and *Stachys coccinea* (Scarlet Hedge Nettle). What a successful trip!

On Sunday, September 15th a small number of plant lovers headed toward Little Cherry Creek Campground not quite knowing if we would be swept away in raging waters. This turned out not to be the case, but it was wet, causing us to head in a different direction at least once. As you might expect, there were lots of plants in bloom. I can only mention a few of the more noteworthy.

Aside from masses of *Xanthisma gracile* (Slender Sleep Daisy) covering lots of the area, there was plenty of *Amauriopsis dissecta* (Bahia) rising above the *Xanthisma*. Scattered here and there was the striking, dark blue, *Delphinium scopulorum* (Rock Mountain Larkspur) and also there were very large numbers of *Ipomopsis aggregata* (deep red Skyrocket). Also, in spectacular display here and there, we found nearly three-feet tall examples of *Oenothera elata* (Hooker's Evening Primrose). Finally, we came upon numerous *Potentilla thurberi* (Thurber's Cinquefoil), the deep red variety. This was another very successful trip!