



**GILA
NATIVE
PLANT
SOCIETY**

October 2017

Vol 7 No 4

Helen Shoup, Editor

Bulletin 2017: Quarter 4

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](#).

Meetings/Field Trips for This Quarter

All meetings 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 May, unless otherwise specified. Refreshments follow the program. Field Trips are set for April through August.

All field trip participants meet in the south parking lot of the WNMU Fine Arts

Center Theater on E Street at 8:00 am for carpooling. The field trips are April through September and are nearly always held on the third Sunday, unless otherwise specified. The leader is Kevin Keith. The trips are also free and open to the public. The destination may change, depending on the weather and the state of the plants.

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.

October Meeting

When: Friday, October 20, 2017, 7:00 pm

Where: Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus, Room 201

Program description: Nathan Newcomer will present the program "Protecting Wilderness & Wild and Scenic Rivers in the Gila National Forest. The Gila National Forest is currently undergoing a Plan Revision, which is something that hasn't happened in 30 years. As a part of this Plan Revision, the Forest Service is required to look at recommending areas for Wilderness and Wild & Scenic designation. For the past 4 years, he and a team of dedicated volunteers have been out on the ground conducting inventories of these lands and waters that they believe qualify for protection. Come learn about some of the wildest places left in the Gila and ways that you can get involved.

Presenter: Nathan Newcomer is a fifth generation New Mexican with 15 years of experience working on wilderness campaigns in the State of New Mexico. He has previously been a grassroots organizer, media director, and associate director at NM Wild, having first joined the organization in 2002. Having moved to Silver City in 2013, he is responsible for coordinating and organizing efforts to protect wild places and rivers in the Gila National Forest.

November Meeting

When: Friday, November 17, 2017, 7:00 pm

Where: Harlan Hall, WNMU Campus, Room 201

Program description: Kristi Dunn will present the program "Landscaping on the WNMU campus."

Presenter: Kristi Dunn

In November I would like to talk about what projects we have done here on campus in the past two years since I have been here. Pointing out that we have tried to incorporate native plants as much as possible, while still trying to create a lush, more sophisticated atmosphere. Trying to catch and hold the attention of students and parents is a constant challenge. We have a wonderful opportunity on this campus since the climate provides us with some great growing conditions for a wide variety of plants. Even though we may be in the process of taking out some plantings that people regard as fixtures on the campus, we are replacing them with innovative ideas, new varieties and hopefully creating an upgraded version that will draw the attention that we need.

We are also working with the YCC kids from Aldo Leopold and have had them on campus doing projects on everything from water harvesting to land sculpting and orchard planning and planting. We had their trail crew create a new trail for Tree Rock that makes it much more accessible for all.

As for me, my name is Kristi Dunn and I am originally from Spokane

Washington. However, I have lived in the Southwest for over twenty-five years. Twenty-two of those years have been spent in the horticulture industry. I have been involved with just about every aspect of horticulture from sales and design to planning crops and managing plant sales reps over three states. My husband Rick and I owned Dunn's Nursery and Garden Center here in Silver City for about four years and I have immense joy in driving around town and seeing plants that I know came from us! After we closed the nursery I went to ACE Hardware and built up their nursery and garden center. ACE was great, and my constant contact with the public was a lot of fun. Two years ago, this month I was recruited by WNMU as the Grounds Supervisor. There was a learning curve coming from retail, but I love my job! Working at WNMU and helping to change the face of this university is a fantastic opportunity and I am thankful to be a part of it.

December Meeting: Holiday Party

When: Sunday, December 17, 2017, 1:00 - 3:00 pm

Where: Volunteer Center of Grant County, 501 E. 13th Street, west of Swan [[Map](#)]

Description: The Holiday Party starts at 1:00 pm.

It is a potluck, so you need to bring:

- * A selection of food to share with others
- * Your own plates and silverware

GNPS will provide a major meat dish and non-alcoholic drinks.

Plant of the Quarter: Blanket Flowers

By Keller Suberkropp

General description

Blanket flowers (*Gaillardia* species) look like large colorful (red and yellow) daisies

as they are in the aster family (Asteraceae). The flower is really an inflorescence composed of many small disc and ray flowers.

They bloom nonstop during the summer and, because they are very attractive, have been bred for ornamental use. They are called blanket flowers possibly due to the brightly colored red and yellow inflorescences that resemble blankets made by Native Americans.

Attractions

The flowers attract bees and butterflies, and the seeds attract birds.

Care

Blanket flowers are drought-tolerant, tough plants once established. They like full sun but can handle partial shade. Some species are annuals, others are perennials.

Uses

They may be used as food by some caterpillars but are seldom eaten by deer. Seeds are eaten by birds.

Different species

There are over two dozen species native to North and South America. Three species are native to the Gila region (all pictured below):

1. Great blanket flower (*G. aristata*) – a perennial with an intense red center with yellow on the outside
2. Yellow blanket flower (*G. pinnatifida*) – a perennial that is mainly yellow with a red center
3. Indian blanket flower (*G. puchella*) – an annual similar to the Great blanket flower in color

The popular commercial *Gaillardia x grandiflora* – a hybrid between *G. aristata* and *G. puchella*



Great blanket flower (*G. aristata*)



Yellow blanket flower (*G. pinnatifida*)



Indian blanket flower (*G. puchella*)



Popular commercial *Gaillardia x grandiflora*

Silva Creek Botanical Garden Report

By Elroy Limmer, Garden Chairman

The Garden is looking better all of the time, thanks to the many hours put in by our volunteers. It looks to me that at this point about 250 hours have gone into the Garden this year.

Recently a lot of energy has gone into mulching many of the beds. We received a

large load of mulch in August and we are spreading it through out the beds. The Garden also received some used culverts from Hamilton Construction which we are recycling as planters. We hope to get large plants in them over the fall and winter so they make a big statement next year. We are still working with the State and the City on getting signage telling folks where the Garden is located.

A recent visitor commented that the Garden is beginning to look like a "big city garden." Another visitor said " Oh wow I expected to see some small garden, nothing like this." With all of the Volunteer hours that our members are putting in, Silver City has a garden that the entire community can be very proud of. Hats off to all of the special people.









Meetings/Field Trips from Last Quarter

A description of the programs from last quarter follows:

July Fieldtrip

On Sunday, July 16, 2017, Kevin Kieth led a group to Tadpole Ridge Trail 232 in the Pinos Altos Range, Gila National Forest. It was a moderate hike on a well-maintained trail passes through a flat, open ponderosa forest before ascending an east-facing slope. They saw both pictured flowers (*Cologania angustifolia* and *Lotus wrightii*).



Cologania angustifolia
([WNMU photo by Russ Kleinman](#))



Lotus wrightii
([WNMU photo by Russ Kleinman](#))







August Field Trip

On Sunday, August 20, 2017, the field trip to Little Dry Creek Trail was rained out. We are happy for any rain we get but are disappointed when it interferes with such a fun day!

September Meeting

On Friday, September 8, 2017, (a different evening than usual), Patrice Mutchnick, PhD, Botanist, presented the program "Important Plant Areas" of the Gila; a Virtual and Photographic Tour. Dr. Mutchnick is currently working with the Upper Gila Water Alliance (UGWA) on Salt Cedar control in the Gila, worked with the Gila NF Rare Plant Program from 2011-2016.

Through photos and interactive maps, Dr. Mutchnick explained about Important Plant Areas as defined by the 2017 state-wide "Rare Plant Conservation Strategy."

She told us about the 8 distinct areas that have been identified in the Gila as well as some of the rare plants that live in each of these unique habitats to understand what has made these areas worthy of special protection.

September Field Trip

On Sunday, September 17, 2017, Kevin Kieth led the group to Blackjack Trail 568 in the Big Lue Mountains, Apache National Forest, Arizona. For the first mile, the route followed a dirt road along a canyon bottom inhabited by Ponderosa and Chihuahuan pine.

The road then went up onto a ridge into a woodland of Mexican piñon and Madrean live oaks. They saw both *Pinus cembroides* and *Macropitium gibbosifolium*, the orange stringbean, in the understory, both pictured below!



[Pinus cembroides](#)



[Macropitium gibbosifolium](#)