

**GILA  
NATIVE  
PLANT  
SOCIETY**

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January 2019

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Helen Shoup, Editor

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## Bulletin 2019: 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](#).

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### Meetings 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 May, 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

## January Meeting

**When:** Friday, January 18, 2019, at 7:00 pm

**Where:** WNMU's Harlan Hall (on 12th Street), Room 222

**Topic:** Know the Trees II: Twigs, Cones, and Fruit

This program helps participants identify our native trees in the winter.

**Presenters:** Richard Felger and William (Bill) Norris

### **Bios:**

**Richard Felger** has been a biologist since childhood. He received his PhD at the University of Arizona. Subsequently he was on the faculty of the University of Colorado and then Senior Curator of Botany at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. Returning to Tucson (the Desert Museum and the University of Arizona), he continued research in deserts worldwide and has published widely in fields of botany, ethnobiology, and new arid-land food crops. He has been active in international conservation, including pioneer conservation of sea turtles. Richard is a researcher with the University of Arizona Herbarium and lives in Silver City with his wife Silke Schneider and their many animals and plants.

**William (Bill) Norris** is Professor of Biology at WNMU (since 2001), where he teaches numerous botany courses as well as ecology and ornithology. Bill enjoys collaborating with other botanists on research projects that include monographic studies of sedges (*Carex*), forest monitoring in Iowa's Paleozoic Plateau, and floristic studies of native vegetation remnants in both Iowa and New Mexico.

## February Meeting

**When:** Friday, February 16, 2019, at 7:00 pm

**Where:** WNMU's Harlan Hall (on 12th Street), Room 222

**Topic:** Seed Gathering and Propagation of Native Plants

**Presenter:** Tricia Hurley

Tricia Hurley and her husband have owned the Lone Mountain Native Nursery for many years, and GNPS is lucky that she is willing to share her extensive experience in plant propagation with us.

## March Meeting

**When:** Friday, March 16, 2019, 7:00 pm

**Where:** WNMU's Harlan Hall (on 12th Street), Room 222

**Topic:** Moths of the Gila National Forest and Vicinity

**Presenter:** Ron Parry

Ron has worked with moths locally and in Central America. He is currently in Costa Rica doing volunteer work at the La Selva Field Station in collaboration with Prof. Lee Dyer and an EarthWatch group.

**Description:** The Lepidoptera is an order of insects that includes both butterflies and moths. Many people are familiar with butterflies because of their beauty and their presence during daylight hours. In comparison to butterflies, moths are little appreciated since they are largely nocturnal. This is unfortunate since many moths are beautiful and their biology is equally interesting. Most of the larger moths found within the Gila region fall into one of 8 moth families. This talk will summarize the characteristics of moths in each of these families and provide examples of local moths from each group.

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## Newly Elected Officers

At the November meeting, these members were elected for a two-year term as the officers of Gila Native Plant Society beginning January 1, 2019:

- Don Graves, President

- William (Bill) Norris, Vice President (re-elected)
- Jane Spinti, Secretary
- Wendy Graves, Treasurer

All of us can welcome them at the January 2019 meeting!

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## Volunteer Thank-You Party

The Board of the Gila Native Plant Society hosted a party to thank volunteers for all their hard work at the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. It was held at the home of Jane Kruse and David Cummings at 43 Rocky Creek Road on Saturday, November 3, 2018. There was a good turnout and all enjoyed the delightful time together.

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## Loss of Charles Holmes Memorialized

A memorial gathering for Charles Holmes was held at the Silva Creek Botanical Garden on North Virginia Street on Sunday, October 14, 2018. Many members attended, and some brought snacks for all of us to enjoy while we talked about Charles' Holmes time with GNPS.

After moving to Silver City in 2007, Charles became active in the Gila Native Plant Society, serving for years as the editor of the GNPS Bulletin and as the chapter's representative to the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. He was instrumental in starting and developing what later became the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. It seemed appropriate to hold the gathering at the spot where he put in the first plants 10 years ago.

Donations may be made in his name to the Jack & Martha Carter Conservation Fund through the Native Plant Society of New Mexico website (<https://www.npsnm.org/conservation/carter-conservation-fund/>).



Betty Spence, Charles Holmes, Denise Friedrich, and Dennis Switzer in the background at the garden



Ron Groves, Betsy Kaido, Jane Spinti, Pam Bryant, Joan Limmer, Elroy Limmer,

Keller Suberkropp, Dennis Switzer, and Charles Holmes in the front

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## Plant of the Quarter: Fernbush (*Chamaebatiaria millefolium*)

**By Keller Suberkropp**

### **Description**

Fernbushes are semi-evergreen shrubs in the Rose family (Rosaceae). They have also been called “desert sweet.” They produce upright fuzzy stems that spread out to form a somewhat rounded bush that is 4-6 feet tall and wide.

The common name, fernbush, comes from the fern-like appearance of the deeply dissected olive-green foliage. The leaves are leathery, aromatic, somewhat sticky and can remain green throughout the year. The shredding bark is reddish.

Fernbushes are large and dense enough that they can be planted as a screen, background, or border. They are also good as a specimen plants since they flower in mid-summer.





### **Locations**

They occur in the western US from Idaho to New Mexico, west to California. They are more common north of us but can do well in Silver City.

### **Care**

Fernbushes are drought tolerant and grow in full sun to partial shade. They are most commonly found on gravelly soil but can adapt to many types of well-drained soils. They occur at elevations from 4,500 – 7,000 ft.

They are generally low maintenance once established and have no known insect pests or diseases. They appear to be deer resistant.

### **The Flowers**

The flowers are small (0.5 inch diam) and creamy white. They are showy, fragrant, and are arranged in upright panicles. Fernbushes flower profusely in mid-summer. The multitude of flowers produced during the summer attracts a variety of pollinators including bees, wasps, butterflies, and beetles. Once flowering is finished they form ornamental seed heads.



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## The Raffle Was a Great Success!

Many of you may remember seeing the magnificent quilt depicting a landscape with 50 native plants of the Southwest this year at the Seedboat Gallery, the Gila Symposium, the Native Plant Society of New Mexico Annual Conference, and other venues. The quilt, painted on silk and hand-quilted by local artist Elli Sorensen, was generously donated to the Gila Native Plant Society for fund-raising. In fact, some of you may have purchased a raffle ticket and are wondering how the raffle turned out.

The raffle drawing was held at the meeting of the Gila Native Plant Society on October 19, 2018. The winner of the quilt was Kristin Haskins, plant ecologist and Director of Research at The Arboretum at Flagstaff. Disappointed as some of us may be that we didn't win the quilt ourselves, we have to admit that Kristin is an eminently worthy recipient.

Best of all, she intends to hang the quilt, along with the key to the plants, in the hall of the Walter Reichardt House and Visitor Center at the Arboretum, where visitors



on a guided tour will be able to see it. The Arboretum at Flagstaff is closed to the public for the winter from November 1, but the quilt will be on display when the Arboretum opens again on April 15, 2019. It's a great place to visit.

Here is the quilt created on silk by Elli Sorensen:



The raffle included second and third prizes as well. Janine Risser of Rio Rancho won second prize, a photograph of Rothrock's Basketflower (*Plectrocephalus rothrockii*) taken by Elroy Limmer and float-mounted on metal.



Beth Leuck of Silver City won third prize, a signed original poster by Jim Brandenburg donated by Pam Bryant, framed and matted.



The fund-raising from the raffle was a great success. The Gila Native Plant Society is planning to use the funds for grants for worthwhile native plant projects and scholarships to promising students in the natural sciences.

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## Silva Creek Botanical Garden Report

By Elroy Limmer, Garden Chairman

After all of the efforts of so many members of our organization, the Garden has become a showplace in the community. This was the fourth growing season since the GNPS agreed to take on the garden. The rewards have been many; the Chapter hosted the State's Conference, and not only were there many accolades but envy that we could do such a project. Out-of-town guests are stopping by regularly and pleasantly surprised at how nice it looks.



A few of us “put the garden to bed” this fall and are now planning for the 2019 season. Many of the plants produce seed in the fall and have been left for the wintering birds to feed on, so we will be looking for help in February to get the new season off to a good start.

Thanks to Denise Friedrich, her welding skills, and the help of her husband Bill Norris, the fencing along the north side of the Garden was manufactured and installed. This happened just before Christmas. It looks great.

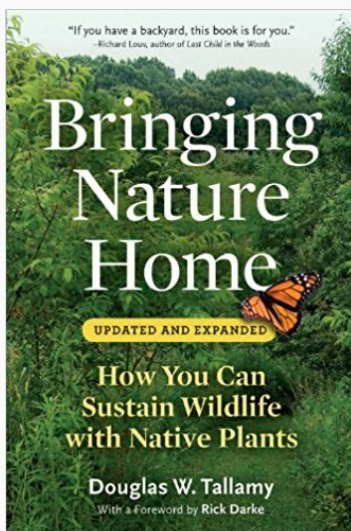
There are a few new projects in the works for the new year and hopefully many of you will be willing to help with them. I will be asking when the time is right. As always thanks for all the help.

Hope to see you in the Garden!

Elroy, Garden Chairman

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## Book of the Quarter: Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants



***Bringing Nature Home: How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants***, Second Edition, Revised and Expanded  
Tallamy, Douglas W., Forward by Rick Darke  
Published 2009 by Timber Press  
Paperback; 288 pages, diagrams & color photos throughout

### **From Inside Flap:**

With the accelerating pace of development and subsequent habitat destruction, the



pressures on wildlife populations are greater than they have ever been in our nation's history. Fortunately, there is still time to reverse this alarming trend, and gardeners have the power to make a significant contribution toward sustaining biodiversity.

As this revelatory book eloquently explains, there is an unbreakable link between native plant species and native wildlife. Indeed, most native insects cannot, or will not, eat alien plants. When native plant species disappear or are replaced by alien exotics, the insects disappear, thus impoverishing the food source of birds and other animals. In many parts of the world, habitat destruction has been so extensive that local wildlife populations are in crisis and may well be headed toward extinction.

By favoring native plants, gardeners can provide a welcoming environment for wildlife of all kinds. This doesn't necessarily entail a drastic overhaul of existing gardens. The process can be gradual and can reflect both the gardener's preferences and local sensitivities. To help concerned gardeners, this clearly reasoned account includes helpful lists of native plants for different regional habitats.

Healthy local ecosystems are not only beautiful and fascinating; they are also essential to human well-being. By heeding Douglas Tallamy's affecting arguments and acting upon his practical recommendations, gardeners everywhere can make a difference.

**Availability:** It is available on the GNPS website. It is \$17 plus \$1.74 shipping, for a total of **\$18.74**.

1. Click the [website](#), scroll down to the book, and click **Add to Cart**.
2. Scroll back up the top right of the page, and click **View Cart**.

**Result:** The Cart page appears.

3. Click **Paypal** button at the bottom left.

**Result:** The Paypal login page appears.

4. Log into Paypal and pay \$18.74 for the book through Paypal.

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## Programs from Last Quarter

A description of the programs from last quarter follows:

### October Meeting

On Friday, October 19, 2018, had their October meeting in Harlan Hall. The program was "Know the Trees: A Workshop" and presented by Richard Felger, Russ Kleinman, and William (Bill) Norris. The presenters helped the attendees to examine numerous fresh leafy stems and the basic leafy shoot structure/tree identification strategies. Many participants brought a hand-lens to help identify the trees. GNPS also drew the 3 winners of the raffle.

### November Meeting

On November 16, 2018, GNPS had a great club meeting at Harlan Hall. The meeting included a presentation by George Farmer on the ancient olla irrigation process - its history as well as how to use it today. In this dry area, irrigation is highly important, and the attendees were obviously well aware of this fact! Using olla irrigation makes it possible to conserve water, always a concern in this area. Farmer explained the science behind it and how to make it work. He answered lots of questions.

### December Picnic/Holiday Party

On Sunday, December 16, 2018, from Noon to 3:00 pm at the Commons (the Volunteer Center), GNPS had the usual potluck lunch with the club providing the customary pork roast and iced tea with a hot water heater for tea and coffee; the group brought lots of dishes for the enjoyment of everything.



At the gathering, GNPS presented Betsy Kaido with a ceremonial gold-plated shovel as a way of expressing thanks for all her hard work and generous contributions to the Silva Creek Botanical Garden.



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**Our mailing address is:**

PO Box 457  
Silver City, NM 88062

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