

**GILA
NATIVE
PLANT
SOCIETY**

October 2016

Vol 6 No 4

Helen Shoup, Editor

Bulletin 2016: 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](#).

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.

October Meeting

When: Friday, October 21, 2016

Program: Russ Kleinman reviews his moss projects

Description: Ancient Sea Ledges, Deep Rocky Canyons, Lava Flows, Ice Caves, and Other Challenging Places Mosses Hide.... Russ Kleinman will share the difficulties and excitement experienced while looking for mosses and liverworts in some of the toughest landscapes in New Mexico. Come find out why Carlsbad Caverns National Park and El Malpais National Monument are two of New Mexico's most spectacular outdoor destinations.

November Meeting

When: Friday, November 18, 2016

Program: Ann Hedlund and Hosana Eilert will present the work they have been doing on dyes from native plants

Description: Information on the speakers:

- Ann Lane Hedlund 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. Ann 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 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. Hosana 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.

December Meeting: Holiday Party

When: Sunday, December 11, 2016, 1 pm

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

Description: The Holiday Party starts at 1pm. 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.

Featured Plant: Rubber Rabbitbrush (*Ericameria nauseosa*)

By Keller Suberkropp, PhD

Rabbitbrush or Chamisa is a member of the aster family (Asteraceae). It is a diverse species with a number of subspecies. The species name *nauseosa* refers to the smell given off by leaves and flowers when crushed.

General description

Rabbitbrush is a fast-growing perennial shrub that ranges from 2-7 feet tall. It forms several stems at the base that branch giving the shrub a rounded appearance. It has many yellow flowers at the ends of the stems.

Why it is in NM

Rabbitbrush is native to NM. It is drought tolerant and cold hardy. It thrives in a wide variety of alkaline soils and favors sunny, open sites that may have been disturbed. It has been used as an ornamental xeriscaping shrub that is useful in soil stabilization, since it forms deep roots. It is often found in dry streambeds and stream margins.

The flexible (rubbery) stems and leaves (linear and alternate) are generally greenish gray with a soft felt-like covering of hairs which reduce water loss. It is widespread in the western United States from western Texas to New Mexico and Arizona and north to Canada.



You probably recognize this bush, as it is common in Silver City and the Gila.

Picture by Elroy Limmer



A closeup of the flowers on the bush

Picture by Elroy Limmer

The flowers

The “flower” of rabbitbrush contains 5 small, yellow, pungent-smelling disk flowers. The plant typically flowers in the fall from September to October. The flowers are attractive to bees, butterflies, and birds. Around Silver City, as many as 8 species of butterflies have been seen around one plant. It reproduces from seeds from the flowers and from root sprouts.

Uses

Forage value varies greatly depending on the subspecies. In some locations it can be an important browse plant for mule deer, pronghorn, and jack rabbits. It is generally considered of little forage value for livestock. The shrub serves as a favorable habitat for small mammals and birds.

Native Americans used the shrub to make chewing gum, tea, cough syrup, and yellow dye. The twigs were used to make baskets. At various times, it has been considered a source of rubber, but the process of producing rubber from it is not cost-effective. In addition, compounds from the shrub are being investigated for medicine and as an insect repellent.

2016 Annual Conference in Las Cruces

We had representatives attend the 2016 Annual Conference by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico which was held this year in Las Cruces. They **Celebrated the Organ Mountains - The Desert Peaks National Monument: Hidden Diversities and Secrets Revealed** with many interesting presentations including one by our own Russ Kleinman. There were also three days of fascinating field trips.

They left Thursday, September 22, and returned Sunday, September 25. They enjoyed all but were sad to miss the Gila River Fest.



Left to right: Pam Bryant, Ron Groves, Dave Christiani, and Joan Limmer on the field trip to Aden Crater. Photo by Elroy Limmer

Programs/Field Trips from Last Quarter

A description of the programs and field trips from last quarter follow:

July Field Trip

On Sunday, July 17, 2016, the Gila Native Plant Society had a field trip to Tadpole Ridge via Trail 232 from Sheep Corral Canyon, starting at 7300 feet. Kevin Keith led the group. The hike took them through large-diameter mixed conifer and Gambel's oak with a diverse understory of shrubs and herbaceous plants. They also saw many members of the legume family, including lotus, lupine, and vetch that were currently in bloom.

These flowers represent the types of blooms seen by the hiking group:



Lotus wrightii



Lupinus argenteus

August Field Trip

Kevin Keith took a group for the Gila Native Plant Society to Lower Gallinas Canyon in the Black Range on Sunday, August 21, 2016. The group saw many uncommon plants in the canyon as the hike followed a perennial stream.

These plants were some of those seen by the group:



Allium cernuum



Echeandia flavescens

September Meeting

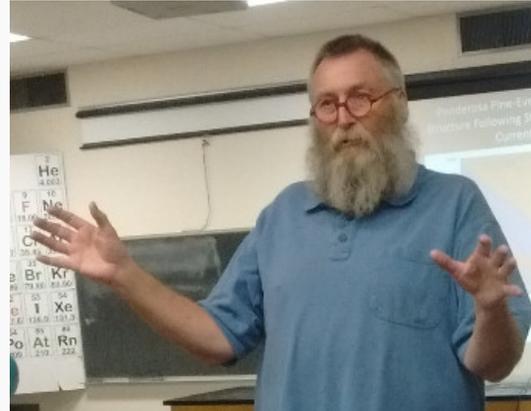
On Friday, September 16, 2016, GNPS had its September meeting at Harlan Hall, WNMU. The speakers were Mitchel Wheeler, Ecologist, and Matthew Schultz, Forest Planner, both of the US Forest Service. Their topic was Assessment of the Gila National Forest by Means of Ecological Response Units.

They are using 5 forest types, 5 woodlands, 3 grasslands, and 1 shrub area for their assessment, all within a 47-million-acre area, but the Gila National Forest encompasses only 3.3 million acres of the area. Wheeler introduced the group to the type of assessments and models they are using, and Schultz discussed the report that will be available for comment shortly at the [Forest Plan Revision](#)

website. A spirited question and answer session took place after the presentations.



Matthew Schultz, Forest Planner



Mitchel Wheeler, Ecologist

Postscript: We received this letter from Matt Schultz on September 21, 2016

Hello all,

Thank you for your interest in the Gila Forest Plan Revision.

The Draft Assessment Report is now available at http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd518769.pdf.

This document identifies ecological, social and economic conditions, trends, and any risks to sustainability of the Gila National Forest resources. Thanks to everyone that shared input, suggestions, data, plans, references, and other information sources for the Gila National Forest assessment. It is a large document (22MB) so it may take some time to download from the website. We recommend using the hyperlinks in the table of contents and/or the bookmarks to navigate around the report to find the chapters that you are most interested in. There is a summary at the end of each chapter. You can also download individual sections of the report from our website (<http://go.usa.gov/h88k>). If you have trouble downloading the draft assessment report, let us know and we would be happy to send you a CD containing the report.

We highly encourage your feedback on the Draft Assessment Report and participation moving forward. For example, did we overlook anything? Please send any feedback or suggestions on the draft assessment report preferably in digital form to gilaplan@fs.fed.us, drop it off at one of the [District Offices](#), or mail to Gila National Forest
Attn.: Matt Schultz
3005 E. Camino del Bosque

Silver City, NM 88061

This feedback is most useful if submitted before November 15, 2016.

Next steps

- A draft needs-for-change document will be released for feedback in October 2016. A need-for-change paints a picture of the strategic changes in current management direction necessary to address issues identified by the assessment and present a vision for future management of the Gila National Forest.
- More community meetings will be held in late October to early November 2016 to discuss assessment key findings and collaborate to determine needs-for-change to the current plan. A schedule of these events will be posted soon. Your input will help the Gila NF to develop forest plan direction that will provide for a healthy, diverse, and productive Forest in addition to the many benefits and uses desired by local communities and visitors of today and future generations.

The Forest will continue to update information on the plan revision process on the Forest's web site at <http://go.usa.gov/h88k>.

Let me know if there are any questions. Thanks in advance for any feedback or suggestions you can provide.

Sincerely,
Matt Schultz



Matt Schultz
Forest Planner
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Caring for the land and serving people

September Field Trip

Kevin Keith took another group to Tennessee Gulch in the Big Lue Mountains, approximately 3 miles west of Mule Creek. The group went on Sunday, September 18, 2016, and it was the last hike of the 2016 summer season.

The trail they hiked wound through a mosaic of ponderosa forest, woodland, and sculpted outcroppings of white rhyolite. They saw Madrean pines, *Pinus chihuahuensis* and *Pinus cembroides*, in the area.



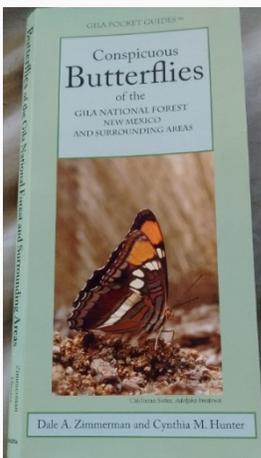
Blue gramma, *Bouteloua gracilis*. Photo by Elroy Limmer



Day flower, *Commelina dianthifolia*, Photo by Elroy Limmer

Featured Pamphlet: Conspicuous Butterflies of the Gila National Forest New Mexico and Surrounding Areas by Dale Zimmerman & Cynthia Hunter

"More than two-thirds of New Mexico's nearly 320 butterfly species are known from the southwestern corner of the state, where over 170 have been recorded on the Gila National Forest alone. The 56 species covered in this guide represent a sampling of the more conspicuous butterflies of this ecologically diverse region. Most of these range widely in suitable habitat through southern New Mexico and into southeastern Arizona." (from inside cover)



This pamphlet will help you identify the butterflies you see in your yard, on your native plants! The beautiful full color pictures are extremely helpful and make identification much easier!

Where to order: To order a copy, go to the [website](#) and scroll down.

Cost: \$8 +3.27 S&H for fold-out pocket guide with photos
You can use Paypal to pay for it or you can send a check. If you plan to pick up the pamphlet(s) or wish to pay by check, you need to complete one of the two order forms

on the website and follow the instructions on the form. There is no shipping & handling charge if you pick up the pamphlet(s).



Here's what the inside of the pamphlet looks like - lots of pictures for identification!

New Members

We had some new members join this quarter:

- * Janna Mintz
- * Theresa Gredig
- * Torie Grass

We all welcome these folks to the chapter!