

April 1 2021 Vol 11 No 2 Betsy Kaido, Editor

Bulletin 2021: Quarter 2

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 also available on the GNPS website http://www.gilanps.org.

President's Message



In our first quarter bulletin from this January, I asked if anyone was interested in volunteering for a variety of special projects to help us continue the great work that we do. GNPS member Margie Ann Gibson heeded the call and offered her skills as a graphic designer. The result is an eye-pleasing advertising card for the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. This card (shown below) will help us transition from our initial SCBG tri-fold brochure to a new brochure that we hope to produce in a couple of years. Projects have recently been completed, new ones are underway

and old ones are moving forward (see SCBG report below).

Our Silva Creek Botanical Garden Steering Committee continues to discuss pathways to the future for the garden. With all of this transition, it seemed appropriate to have a simple advertising card that can act as a place holder until we are ready for a more comprehensive brochure that features all of these important transformations. These new, two-sided cards will be available to tourists at the Silver City Visitors Center and at GNPS post-Covid public events. So, a big thanks to Margie for helping GNPS and the Silva Creek Botanical Garden transition into the future.





A beautiful park featuring over one hundred species of plants native to the area. Highlights include a butterfly garden and a garden of medicinal plants. If you're unfamiliar with our native plants you'll be susprised at their

attractiveness and diversity. If you're planning your own garden, it's a wonderful place for inspiration. Labels identify individual species.



A Brief History

The Botanical Garden was once a site for supplying water to a railroad that ran from Deming to serve mines in the area. Today, the original 1906 water tower remains. For years the town of Silver City used the area for vehicle storage.

In 2004 volunteers began to turn the site into a garden constructing raised beds along the front and north sides. In 2012, the Gila Native Plant Society adopted it, gradually adding new beds, more plants, an amphitheater, and a kiosk.



Fish hook Barrel Cactus, Ferrocactus wislizeni.

Keeping it Growing

Silva Creek Botanical Garden depends on help from volunteers, who get together on scheduled workdays. This can involve planting, weeding, pruning, removing debris, and other activities. If you'd like to help, send an emal to: gilanative@gmail.com. Also, donations to the Silva Creek Botanical Garden are always needed and appreciated — and they are tax-deductible. Send



The Garden is located on Virgin

Street, 2 blocks north of US 180.

veen Hill and State Streets

P.O. Box 457 Silver City NM 88062



-- Don Graves

Activities for This Quarter

Virtual meetings will be held via Zoom. Free and open to the public. Chapter members will receive a Zoom link by email; any others interested may request a link from gilanative@gmail.com. All are welcome. For more information about these programs, check our website at www.gilanps.org/events/programs.

Friday, April 16, 2021, 7 pm – Virtual Meeting. "Ecology of a desert night-blooming cactus, *Peniocereus greggii*, in New Mexico" – presenter Beth Leuck

Peniocereus greggii is a state-endangered cactus found in four southwestern New Mexico counties. It is hidden among the desert vegetation in areas where it occurs, making it difficult to find. However, on one to three nights in late spring, individuals of a given population flower synchronously. Beth will discuss this cactus' habitat, plant associations,



flowering, and its ability to apparently die and resurrect itself.

Beth received her PhD in zoology from the University of Oklahoma and taught for over 30 years in the biology department at Centenary College of Louisiana. She also taught ecology for many years at the Central Michigan University Biological Station on Beaver Island, Michigan, and continues to participate in several ongoing research projects on the island during the summer months.

Thursday, April 29, 2021, 5:30 pm -- GNPS and Southwest NM Audubon Society present Trivia Night



Get ready for a virtual trivia night collaboration hosted by GNPS and the Southwest NM Audubon Society! There will be plant and animal questions with a prize for the winner! We hope to see you there!



Friday, May 21, 2021, 7 pm – Virtual Meeting. "Introduction to Liverworts of New Mexico" – presenter Karen Blisard



Karen will discuss these small non-vascular plants, including their morphology, how they are different from mosses, how to look at them, and which ones occur in New Mexico.

Karen earned a BS in Chemistry from Texas Tech University, and pursued graduate studies in medicine and pharmacology at Northwestern University in Chicago and

Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. After a pathology residency at the University of New Mexico and a brief stint in academic pathology at the University of Cincinnati, she practiced pathology at Gila Regional Medical Center. She has been studying liverworts for about 10 years.

Videos of 1st quarter meetings are available on the GNPS website. Click <u>here</u> and scroll down for the links to these recordings.

From the Treasurer -- It's Not Just a Balance Sheet

GNPS Now a PayPal Giving Charity

At some point this fall, I became aware that PayPal, which is the tool we use for checkout from our online bookstore, had two red flags on our dashboard page. These red flags were enticing me to complete the process of becoming a confirmed PayPal charity. As I assumed this might be entangled with our present, tax-free status with PayPal, I felt some urgency. I tried the document upload and submission process multiple times, and each time received an error message about the type of document that I had uploaded. Finally, near the end of January, 2021, there was an apologetic email sent from PayPal generically to many vendors, explaining that there had been errors made on their side of the document uploads and to please try again. This time, I had immediate success and we were named a confirmed, PayPal charity.

This, it turns out, enabled us to be a part of PayPal Giving, to establish a PayPal Giving page, and to be eligible for donations by individuals during the checkout process. Those who wish to make donations to GNPS at checkout can even name us as a "favorite" charity and make donations with a single click. We are now set up to make a fundraising push in the future, if we have a project that needs funding, especially a project in the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. Stay tuned for upcoming garden projects!

GNPS Website Developments

We have moved our website hosting services to a different company, which has enabled us to increase our site security. We have also begun making small changes to the website, such as adding updated field trip checklists for some popular destinations near town, and uploading our Landscaping with Native Plants course. To access the course, <u>click here</u>. For additional landscaping with native plants resources, <u>click here</u>.

Wendy Graves

Give Grandly! Give Local! May 8, 2021



GNPS will be participating again this year in the annual Give Grandly! marathon fund-raiser for local non-profits, which will fall on Saturday, May 8th. As plans mature, we'll let you know how we plan to celebrate and how you can donate.

Silva Creek Botanical Garden Report

The Garden is showing signs of spring with many plants showing new life. We have had a couple of work days, and gotten plants dead headed and trimmed for the season. Thanks to all of the great volunteer help, the garden is ready for spring. In the very near future, we will be painting the perimeter fence and staining the new wooden fence around the storage area.



Volunteers take a rest from their clean-up work.



Something I and others have been working on for over two and a half years looks like it should be finished soon. That is a roof over the amphitheater.

Construction started a couple of weeks ago. The footings have been poured and the framework is expected to be erected shortly. Soon we should have a new shady spot for school classes and for other activities. Stop by and see the progress.

-- Elroy Limmer, Garden Chairman

Plant of the Quarter

Sand Sage (Artemesia filifolia)



Sand sage is a medium sized (3-4 ft wide, 1.5 ft tall) feathery shrub in the composite family (Asteraceae). Sand sage has also been called threadleaf sage and pasture sage. It is extraordinarily hardy, exhibits fast growth, grows in full sun to partial shade, and requires very little water. Very little maintenance is needed, but it may be trimmed if it grows too large. Sand sage is found from Nevada to Kansas, and Texas to

South Dakota. It occurs throughout New Mexico at elevations from 4,500 to 10,000 ft, but is more common in the northern two thirds of the state.

The leaves are threadlike, evergreen and range from 1.5-3 inches long and less than 0.2 inches wide. The leaves and the plant as a whole have a blue-gray color and a light



texture. Older stems can become woody. The plants are somewhat fragrant, (i.e., sweetly pungent). Sand sage produces minute, pale yellow flowers on spikes in late summer to autumn (August-November). The pollen produced is allergenic.

Sand sage grows best in sandy soil. The roots bind soil and are good at erosion control. Plants

are resistant to deer, rabbits and insect pests. If plants are found in abundance in an area, it is often taken as a sign of overgrazing. Sand sage has been used as teas or chewed leaves to treat various ailments.

-- Keller Suberkropp

World Water Day Silva Creek Clean-Up



On Saturday, March 20, the Gila Native Plant Society celebrated World Water Day with a cleanup of our section of Silva Creek, just below the Silva Creek Botanical Garden. This very successful event teamed up GNPS member volunteers with our neighbors just across the bridge over Silva Creek. They are members of the Board of Directors from Southwest New MexicoACT (Arts, Culture and Tourism), the non-profit group that is developing the nearby Silver City Waterworks property.

Joining these two teams were three young AmeriCorps workers from Minnesota and California! In all, sixteen volunteers helped clean up and remove dead and downed trees, picked up rubbish in and along the creek and removed potential hazards along the path which leads from the SCBG to Silva Creek. Special thanks to our GNPS volunteers Trish Kirchhoff, Tim Trofe, Jackie Blurton, Jim Blurton, Elroy Limmer and Don Graves.



Mason Bees



Mason Bee (Osmia) on Manzanita (Arctostaphylos pungens)

Mason bees are of the *Osmia* genus. *Osmia* is an important genus with over 130 species in North America. If there aren't many honey bees around, they will pick up the slack and pollenate many crops. Mason bees earn their name because many species make their nests out of mud. The species that I photographed (above) likely line their nests with chewed leaves of the *Arctostaphylos* (Manzanita), as I observed them chewing up the leaves. I am guessing they are hole nesting not ground nesting.

-- Elroy Limmer

2021 Annual Conference in Alamogordo



Mark your calendar now for the August 20 - 22 annual conference. This year you can choose to attend in person or virtually from your home. The events, except for the field trips and banquet, will be available on-line. All COVID precautions in effect at the time of the conference will be adhered to. Presentations are arranged into six time frames, from the Jornada Mogollon Period to the Modern Era. Click here for the link to the conference program and registration information.

A Spring Poem

California February

By Marty Eberhardt

Little shoots of green,
The promise of flowers,
But above
The great oaks crack open
At their curves.
Other branches, already fallen,
Lie like huge wooden snakes
Beneath brown pines.
Dry needles salt the green sprouts.

This year's winter,
Mud-brown, gray-skied, flooded,
Will yield fireworks of poppies,
Purple symphonies of lupines and shooting stars,
Conventions of butterflies and moths.
But there is no return
For those whose roots
Need more
Than one anomalous year.
Some wild lilacs
Will soon burst blue with honey-smell
Midst their neighbor shrubs,
Dry, leafless, lost.

We will sing the spring
As the birds do,
But as we celebrate each new bloom,
Each Canterbury bell, each dark peony
Nodding beneath an oak,
We must raise our eyes to that dead tree,
See it,
Know there may be more,
For one wet winter
Will not deter the expected march
Of drought.



The Gila Native Plant Society is committed

- To promoting education, research, and appreciation of the native flora of the Southwest
- To encouraging the preservation of rare and endangered plant species
- To supporting the use of suitable native plants in landscaping.

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