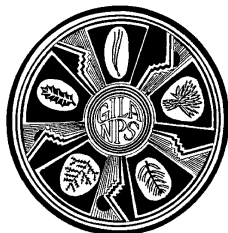


GILA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO



BULLETIN

October, November, December 2011

Editor: Charles Holmes

PROGRAMS

All programs are free and open to the public. Meetings are usually the third Fridays 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 a reminder before the date of the program.

October 21st - Keller Suberkropp, our Vice President and a retired mycologist from the University of Alabama, will enlighten us about "Plant Litter Decomposition in Freshwater Streams." He will focus on the ecology of the fungi involved in the process.

Keller has authored over 70 publications on matters related to plant litter and fungi in streams. He has also recently conducted classes for our members on the fundamentals of fungi.

November 18th - Van Clothier, owner of Stream Dynamics, will present a program on "Water Harvesting for Native Plant Gardens."

He will show slides of local water-harvesting projects and discuss how preserving rain water can turn nuisance storm water runoff into a free water resource. Stream Dynamics, Inc., located in Silver City, is a stream-restoration, water-harvesting and erosion-control business. Clothier is the co-author of "Let the Water Do the Work", a textbook on stream restoration.

Our Annual Christmas Party will be held at the old Elk's Lodge Ballroom (same place as last year) on Saturday, December 17th. The arrangements for this festivity are in progress and have not yet been finalized.

You will be notified well in advance on the details of this event. We will also let you know what foods or drink you might opt to bring to the party. It is a potluck affair with the GNPS supplying some of the major items.

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

REPORT ON THE MID-YEAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO.

The meeting was held this year in Santa Fe. It was very well attended at the Institute of American Indian Art. Among the more important topics discussed are two of concern to all of you.

These issues are: 1) Should the organization continue to sell books at the state level as well as the chapter level? 2) The state organization is looking for a new Vice President to succeed the current one who will move into the President's position at the first of next year. This job basically entails assisting the President with his/her task overload and filling in for that person in his/her absence.

We would like to hear from you regarding these issues. Please contact the GNPS Editor at gnpseditor@gmail.com with your comments.

GNPS Board Report

As mentioned in the last quarterly Bulletin, this is a new feature of the Bulletin that summarizes recent decisions by your Board to keep you better informed about the ongoing activities of the GNPS.

Since there was not have a board meeting during the summer and the next meeting is at the end of September (too late for this Bulletin), there is nothing to report on board activities. We were informed in a recent Program Meeting that both the President and our local Bookseller have offered their opinions that our chapter should continue to sell books.

REPORTS

July 17th – A Visit to the Silva Creek Botanical Garden.

This garden complex is located on Virginia Street, bordering Silva Creek. It displays mostly native plants that tend to grow well in our area. It also takes advantage of the model of raised beds, sometimes over 3 feet tall. This technique was employed because the base soil of much of the area was heavy clay and had been corrupted by substances, like asphalt, when the area was used for road maintenance materials storage and large vehicle parking years ago.

A group of nearly 20 members strolled through the area along the constructed paths, just one of the features that were built by Youth Conservation Corps members from Aldo Leopold High School over the past five years.

As you might expect, due to our lousy weather during the first half of the year, the garden was not at its best. But, the overall aspect of all of the efforts that have been made by community volunteers seemed to please all of the viewers.

If you would like to volunteer at this community garden to help with maintenance tasks, contact Charles Holmes, the Volunteer Manager, at iskander321@hotmail.com.

August 21st – A Trek to Myers Canyon.

A very large contingent of members and guests made the trip along the Georgetown Road to get to this wonderful place, which is one of the best locations in the entire area for native plants in their natural habitats.

We stopped three times before getting there to view meadows full of bloomers that had greatly benefitted from recent rains. One of the particular highlights was fields almost full of *Echeandia flavescens* (Crag Lily) which I had not seen in such profusion before.

Of very special interest was the discovery, by a couple of our botanical experts, of a plant that had not been seen in this area for a very long time. The scientific name is *Ditaxis cyanophylla* and its common name is Charleston Mountain Silverbush. Here is what it looks like up close:



On September 18th, a large group of us visited Spirit Canyon near Lake Roberts for the last field trip of the year.

We discovered so many examples of brilliantly blooming plants that we spent most of the time close to the parking lot. The weather was great and the conditions could hardly have been better for discovering a number of species that might be scarce in other places, though not here. Some of the more outstanding ones were *Plectocephalus rothrockii* (Rothrock's Basket Flower), *Hedeoma hyssopifolium* (Aromatic False Pennyroyal), *Hackelia ursina* (Chihuahuan Stickseed) and *Dalea filiformis* (Sonoran Prairie Clover). We were also fortunate to view a spectacular *Juniperus scopulorum* (Rocky Mountain Juniper) and a very extensive collection of *Viguiera cordifolia* (Heartleaf Goldeneye). (View photos on page 6).

On September 9th, Dr. Richard Felger give us his personal recollections of decades of his work of "botanizing" on some of the "sky islands" of the Gulf of California, especially Tiburon Island and its other smaller neighboring islands.

He told us about some of his local associates, especially among the Seri Indians, and their special efforts to preserve the rather delicate ecosystems that one encounters in this somewhat isolated area. Tiburon Island itself has at least 388 species of plants, some of them being endemic.

Particularly informative was his description and photos of Ice Age pack rat middens that are sources of real evidence of plants that existed tens of thousands of years ago. The concept is breathtaking!

Finally, he told us that we, in Silver City, live near several examples of Sky Islands in the southern Rockies. It would certainly be exciting to explore some of them.

SPECIAL FEATURE

Last month, some of the Tuesday Hiking Group, made up of avid seekers of native plants, as well as hikers, went to a very special place, the Military Road. We made some exciting discoveries that I want to pass on to you. It must have been the right time to be there because we waded through large fields of blooming plants that were taking advantage of the recent rains that had been delayed for so long.

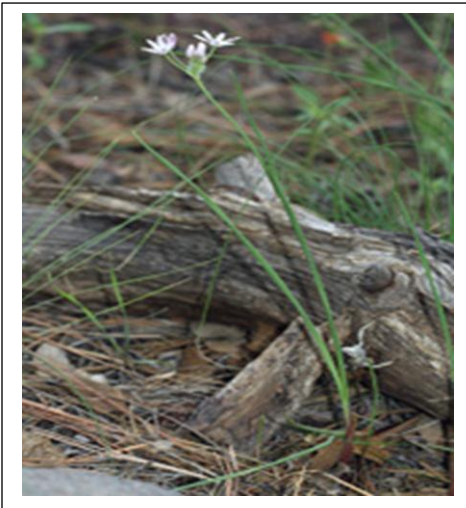
It is hard to find the words to describe the views that we were privileged to take in, but I can, at least, pass on some pictures of two of the plants that I had never seen in this area, though that does not mean that they cannot be found in other places. I have to be careful what I declare because I could be severely mugged by our botanical experts that accompany us on the field trips. (Continued)

5.

The first of the plants to be displayed can be found in various places, if the conditions are right for it. It is a member of the *Fabaceae* family, of which we have many examples in this region. It is called *Macroptilium gibbosifolium* (Orange Bushbean). Along the trail we saw countless numbers of this plant.



The next plant is a member of the Wild Onion family, *Allium rhizomatum* (New Mexico Wild Onion). Although it is not particularly rare, it usually does not appear in such huge numbers in single locations. We saw countless numbers of them.



In the section on the September field trip, I listed a series of plants that we saw that were considered especially significant. The following are some pictures of some of those plants so that you can see what is being described.



Plectocephalus rothrockii



Hedeoma hysoppifolium



Hackelia ursina



Dalea filiformis