Colorado Native Plant Society



NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 1

JANUARY-MARCH 1981

"DEDICATED TO THE APPRECIATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE COLORADO FLORA"

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ADDRESS

COLORADO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 200
Ft. Collins, CO 80522

SCHEDULE OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

LIFE	$ 250.00
SUPPORTING	50.00
SOCIETY	25.00
FAMILY	12.00
INDIVIDUAL	8.00
STUDENT & RETIRED	4.00

Nonmembership subscriptions to the NEWSLETTER are $ 4.00 per year.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES

Please direct all contributions and articles to the EDITOR, Beth Painter, in care of the Society's mailing address.

Deadlines for the quarterly NEWSLETTERS are the last day of February, May, August and November.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND INFORMATION

Please direct all membership applications, renewals and address changes to the MEMBERSHIP Chair, Myrna Steinkamp, in care of the Society's mailing address.

Please direct all other inquiries regarding the Society to the SECRETARY, Sue Martin, in care of the Society's mailing address.

Announcements

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

The Newletter has become quarterly. The change was necessary because of the rising costs in printing and in postage. Deadlines for contributions are now the last day of February, May, August, and November.

A number of people have said that they would be interested in writing articles for the newsletter. Everyone is welcome to submit anything concerning native plants that they feel would be of interest to members of the Society.

If you are unsure about your article, you have a long list of articles, you would like to help with typing, composing, addressing, or stamping please call me (491-5642 work or 482-2283 home) or write to me in care of CoNPS (P.O. Box 200, Ft. Collins, CO 80522).

--- Beth Painter

THE PERCEPTION OF COLORADO LANDSCAPES: THEIR USES AND ABUSES

Dr. Ralph Dix, Professor of Botany and Plant Pathology at Colorado State University, will be presenting a program entitled "The Perception of Colorado Landscapes: Their Uses and Abuses" to the Ft. Collins Chapter of the CoNPS, on March 25, at 7:30 pm, at the Ft. Collins Museum.

The program is open to everyone interested. For information or directions, call Bob Bowman at 491-7095 (work) or 221-3714 (home) or Sue Martin at 482-7717 (work) or 226-1171 (home).



Field Trips

1981 COLORADO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS

The following field trips have been scheduled for this summer. For more information about them or to register for any and all of them, call Bob Heapes at 779-0888 or 841-3978 (before 9 pm please).

May 30, Saturday - Roxburough State Park, Douglas County, Coulorado. Leader: Mrs. Vicki Trammell, who has been associated with the area since 1977.

This last weekend in May should be the height of the flowering season (if the warm winter doesn't throw everything out of order). We will walk the north loop in the morning, returning for lunch, and then, for those who want a little more, do the south loop in the early afternoon. The Park offers beautiful Lyons sandstone outcroppings as well as other unusual things of nature to explore.

June 13, Saturday - Florissant National Monument, west of Colorado Springs, Colorado, "Wild Flowers Past and Present". Leader: F. Martin Brown.

This twelve-square-mile National Monument offers a variety of ecosystems. Martin Brown is the leading authority on the fossilized plants and insects at the Florissant fossil beds in the Monument. He has invited the Society to accomplish the first plant inventory of the Monument and to gather the beginnin collection of specimens for the planned herbarium at the Monument site. Instruction in specimen collection will be offered and Mr. Brown will give a lecture at lunch which will include the actual digging of a fossil (from the shale beds).

July 11, Saturday - Mt. Lincoln and the Cameron Bowl, " An Alpine Experience". Leader: Louise Roloff.

This alpine bowl lies on the shoulder of Mt. Lincoln, a 14,000 foot peak near Hoosier Pass. Miss Roloff is a member of the Colorado Native Plant Society and a forty-year veteran of the Colorado Mountain Club. She has lead wild flower trips for many organizations and has hiked extensively in Summit County for twenty-five years. An accomplished wild flower photographer, she will lead us to one of her favorite "very high" country bowls.

Panayoti Callas, a Colorado Native Plant Society member and curator of the Rock-Alpine Garden at the Denver Botanic Gardens, will give a short "trailhead" lecture to start us off thinking tundra ecosystem. The elevation is high, but the hike will be modest.

--- Bob Heapes

Recent Events

COLORADO SCIENCE TEACHERS TAKEN ON A BRIEF VISIT TO COLORADO LIFE ZONES

When our wide-awake Education Committee learned that the Colorado Association of Science Teachers was holding a statewide conference at CSU in Fort Collins on February 20-21, they promptly requested, and obtained, two spots on the program of the conference to introduce the science teachers to CoNPS's first audiovisual program, "A Brief Visit to Colorado Life Zones."

Virginia Dionigi, Miriam Denham, and Paula Lehr gave the first presentation on the evening of February 21 to an audience of 40 to 45 teachers. They took Lloyd Hayes along to show him how to do it. Being duly trained by the Education Committee, Lloyd was trusted to present the program again the following morning to an audience of about 15 additional teachers.

The 80-slide show, with taped discussion to accompany it, takes the viewers through four life zones from the plains of eastern Colorado, through the foothill and montane zones, to the alpine tundra of the mountains. The show presents more than an introduction to the plants of the life zones. Interwoven in the discussion are lessons in ecology, plant protection and conservation, and the significance of many plants in the lives of insects, birds, herbivorous mammals, Plains Indians, and the pioneers.

Results of these first showings were encouraging. Both audiences were attentive and obviously interested. Negative criticisms were few and were far outweighed by encouraging comments and positive suggestions. The concensus was that the program fills a need and that it will be used when made available. The length of the program (24 minutes) and the scope of the material covered were judged to be about right.

Hats off to Virginia, Miriam, and Paula for having produced an apparent hit on their first try! And our thanks to Ann Armstrong for all her work on the program before she left for England.

--- Lloyd Hayes

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Bill Harmon on his appointment by the governor to the Colorado Natural Areas Advisory Committee. Dr. Harmon is a past president of CoNPS, a former member of its Board of Directors and former chairperson of the Threatened and Endangered Species Committee.

CHAPTER NEWS

The Fort Collins Chapter met on January 28, 1981, in the Overland Trail Room of the Fort Collins Museum. The program featured members' slides of the Colorado flora, particularly of previous CoNPS field trips.

This was the first of four meetings to be held at the Museum in 1981, and we hope the beginning of a productive association between the Chapter and the Museum.

The Chapter will join forces with the Museum sometime this spring to co-sponsor a half-day local field trip to introduce local residents to some of the Ft. Collins area wildflowers, and perhaps to the mysteries of flower keys.

Future Chapter meetings will include a program on paleobotany of Colorado (by Bob Bowman) and another on Colorado grasses (by Genny Bryant). Dieter Wilken and Beth Painter will lead a field trip to see the rhododendrons of Colorado, and Scott Peterson will head a Chapter field trip to the Aspen, Colorado, area. Dates for all these programs and trips are still being worked out.

The next Chapter meeting will be on March 25 at 7:30 pm at the Museum. Dr. Ralph Dix, Professor of Botany and Plant Pathology at Colorado State University, will present the program, "The Perception of Colorado Landscapes: Their Uses and Abuses."

For information or directions, call Bob Bowman (491-7095 work or 221-3714 home) or Sue Martin (482-7717 work or 226-3371).

--- Sue Martin

A BILL TO DESIGNATE A STATE GRASS

The following bill is being introduced in the Colorado State Legislature to designate blue grama (Bouteloua gracilis) as the state grass of Colorado.

House Bill No. 1355
Sponsored by Representatives Younglund, Boley, Gillis, Hinman, Shoemaker, and Tancredo, and by Senators Clark, Yost, R. Powers, and Soash.

Bill Summary: Designates blue grama as the state grass.

WHEREAS, The State of Colorado, unlike other western states, has not yet designated a state grass; and

WHEREAS, More than sixty-five percent of the state of Colorado of forty-three millions acres, is rangeland, and of said forty-three million acres over fifteen million acres is in the

plains and almost twenty-eight million acres is in the mountains and on the western slope; and

WHEREAS, Blue grama is one of the most widely distributed grasses statewide at altitudes below nine thousand five hundred feet; and

WHEREAS, Blue grama is a long-lived, perennial, native, warm season, sod forming grass which provides an abundance of nutritious forage for all classes of livestock, big game animals, and smaller herbivores; now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. Article 80 of title 24, Colorado Revised Statures 1973, as amended, is amended BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION to read:

24-80-913. State grass. Blue grama (Bouteloua gracilis) is hereby made and declared to be the state grass of Colorado.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

HAROLD D. HARRINGTON 1903 - 1981

We regret the recent passing of Dr. Harold D. Harrington, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Botany & Plant Pathology, Colorado State University. Harold was awarded his B.S. in Biology from Iowa State Teachers College in 1927, his M.S. from the University of Iowa in 1931 and his Ph.D. from the same institution in 1933. Until 1943, Harold was a member of the faculty at Chicago Teachers College and it was in that year that he joined the faculty at the then Colorado Agricultural and Mechanical College in Fort Collins.

During his tenure at Colorado State University, Harold reflected the many facets of a distinguished career in teaching, service and research. It has been estimated that over 10,000 students in the varied fields of botany, forestry, range science and wildlife biology passed through his several courses in plant identification. Undoubtedly there are numerous amateurs and professionals who obtained their first introduction to the intricacies of floral structure, their indoctrination into the finely tuned definitions of "floccose, lanate and tomentose", under his patient tutelage and who practice the "generic concept" upon which Harold placed so much emphasis for the purpose of practical identification.

It can be safely estimated that at least as many thousands of plant specimens passed through his hands, most of them often fragments of leaves, winter rosettes, and occasional flowers, always for the purposes of identification. Whether they came from extension agents, farmers, ranchers or elementary school pupils, Harold gave each his best effort in providing the crucial "name". He also gave his services, over many field seasons, to the expansion of the CSU Herbarium, always with the intent of developing a reference collection that would serve as a basis for our increasing knowledge of the Colorado flora. Those efforts, in conjunction with an extensive study of the taxonomic literature of the time, led to his foremost contribution, a Manual of the Plants of Colorado, published in 1954.

Although most students of the flora associate Harold with the latter contribution, he also was an author of scientific articles that appeared in such journals as Science, American Midland Naturalist and Ecology. His other books include Colorado Ferns (1950), The True Aquatic Vascular Plants of Colorado (1955), How To Identify Plants (1957), Edible Native Plants of the Rocky Mountains (1967) and Western Edible Wild Plants (1972). Harold's last text, How to Identify Grasses and Grasslike Plants (1977) reflects his longstanding interest in members of the Poaceae and their allies. And for those who may not have a copy, it begins with Harold's own contribution to the field of poetry, a form of literary expression that he also practiced.

THE IDENTIFICATION OF GRASSES

A grass can be "glumey" in more ways than one,
When its classification remains to be done;
You pull off the parts, and soon feel your age
Chasing them over the microscope stage!

You peer through the lenses at all of the bracts
And hope your decisions agree with the facts;
While your oculist chortles with avid delight
As you strain both your eyes in the dim table light.

You are left on the horns of quite a dilemma
When you count the nerves on the back of the lemma;
Then you really get snoopy and turn each one turtle
To see if the flower is sterile or fertile.

And then the compression, no problem is meaner--
Is it flat like your wallet or round like a wiener?
"How Simple", you think "for a mind that is keen"--
But what do you do when it's half-way between?

You probe and you guess how the florets will shatter,
For you know later on it is certain to matter;
You long for the calmness of labor thats manual
When the question arises--"perennial" or "annual"?

And that terrible texture, the meanest of all,
Is one of the pitfalls in which you can fall;
"Cartilaginous" maybe--or is it "chartaceous"?
Has even the experts exclaiming "Good gracious!"

Then you wail as you wade through the long tribal key,
"Oh, why must this awful thing happen to me?"
"Grasses are easy," our teacher declares,
As he mops off a brow that is crowned with gray hairs!

BOD Activities

The Board of Directors of the Society have met twice in 1981, January 15 and March 12. The major item of business at both meetings was the reorganization of the Society's committees and the formalization of the objectives of these committees.

The current committees of the Society are now Conservation, Editorial, Education, Field Trips, Horticulture and Rehabilitation, Legislature, Membership, and Publicity. Two of these committees are now without chairpersons. Anyone interested in serving as chairperson or in becoming active on one of these committees may contact Lloyd Hayes, any of the other board members, or the appropriate chairperson.

At the end of 1980, the society membership stood at 171. The 1981 membership target is a 50% increase in this number. It is hoped that the newly established Publicity committee will be the major force in meeting this target.

The distribution of the Society poster is being used to publicize the society. Projects such as the Education committee's audiovisual show also serve as publicity. Good advertisement of Chapter and statewide meetings also introduce the Society to the public.

Several members of the Society have offered to present programs about plants under the sponsorship of the society. These include Karen Wiley Eberle, Scott Ellis, Lloyd Hayes, Sue Martin, Scott Peterson, Mark Phillips.

Karen Wiley Eberle presented a program on the edible plants of Northwestern Colorado on January 20 to publicize CoNPS in the Craig area.

If anyone would be interested in having a program sponsored by the Society given in their area or is interested in becoming involved in publicizing the Society by giving programs, they may contact Lloyd Hayes or anyone else on the Board of Directors.

The Threatened and Endangered Species committee was disbanded and a new Conservation committee established. This new committee will deal with a much brader field of concerns. Barry Johnston has agreed to chair the new committee.



Feature Articles

A NATURALIST'S APPROACH TO BIOLOGY

The following is the first of a series of excerpts from an article by D. B. O. Savile entitles "A Naturalist's Approach to Biology", which appeared in The Canadian Field-Naturalist, Volume 94, pp. 105-107. Bill Weber suggested its inclusion in the Newsletter because of its eloquent portrayal of the amateur's role in natural history.

In case some of the younger members are wondering, I hasten to assure them that, although I am what our paternalistic governments glibly call a senior citizen, I am not a charter member of the club and so have no special qualifications for addressing this centennial dinner. I am a bit hazy about how or when I joined the club, somewhere around the end of World War II. Probably Ibra Conners, whom I was then assisting, had a hand in it, for he and several other members of the old Botany Division were active in the club's operations. At about that time, also, I was discovering that different birds had differently shaped wings, with significant aerodynamic implications; and to explain this diversity I had to identify the birds and find out how they lived. So I started going out on the Saturday afternoon excursions, being very dubious about identifying anything but robins and male House Sparrows. About two years later, still a mere neophyte, I found myself pushed into leading many of the bird walks. You see, I was a professional. That leads me into my topic!

What are the distinctions between natural history and biology? And what are the distinctions between the professional and the amateur in natural history and biology? You may recall the episode in the French National Assembly when a deputy was speaking in favor of equal pay for women. "After all," he said "women are not very different from men." A gallant deputy immediately leapt to his feet, hand over heart, and cried "Vive la difference!" Although I agree heartily with him, I hold the opposite view upon natural history and biology and would cry,"Vive l'unite."

Despite somewhat contrasting goals and viewpoints the amateur naturalist and professional biologist depend upon each other. The more natural history and biology are integrated the better for both. We still have far too few competent all-round naturalists in Canada. If someone needs viable seed of an inconspicuous grass that grows 3000 km from his base, there should be an informed naturalist in the right area who can unfailingly collect seed and a voucher of it for him. Is that too much to ask? It would be routine in some countries.

What holds our beginners back? More than anything I think it is sheer fright. Because we in Canada lack a cultural tradition in natural history, many potentially capable naturalists give up at the thought of using a manual in which the plants have Latin names. To communicate with such people the botanist must make up common names for hundreds of inconspicuous plants that lack them, usually by translating, or occasionally mistranslating, the Latin names. Why should learning the international names be any harder for us than for the Japanese, Swiss, Russians, Swedes, Germans, Poles, Czechs and others, to whom natural history is a way of life? Once when we had two of our Czech families home for Christmas the talk turned one evening to muchroom poisoning. Jiri Nor, a very capable engineer but with no training in biology, pulled Walt Groves' book out of the bookcase and was browsing through the amanitas to see what we had, with of course only the Latin names available. Suddenly he pointed out an additional character by which he distinguished two of the species in Czechoslovakia. I suppose I looked stunned, for his friend laughed and said he had been studying them since childhood. Well, there is no reason why we should not, like so many Europeans, bring a sense of dedication to our hobbies. Why, similarly, should learning to use keys be beyond people who can learn, say bookkeeping, weaving, or the rules of a game? Of course it takes some effort, but so does any worthwhile achievement.

Plenty of people have risen to eminence in fields for which they had no formal training. Discussing the amateur in ornithology, Harold Mayfield mentions that Ridgway and Chapman had no university training in biology. To them we can add Taverner, who trained, I seem to recollect, in architecture. Unfettered by custom he innovated by recording specimen weights and he often spread one wing of a study skin, both very desirable customs. Botanists are familiar with plants named by Fernald and Griscom; Ludlow Griscom later became one of the most revered figures in American ornithology.

There is really little or nothing to limit the achievements of the diligent amateur. He may occasionally need help from a professional; but there can be few professionals who do not similarly owe a debt of gratitude to some of their colleagues. The amateur may make occasional mistakes; but the only professionals who have never done so are those who seldom if ever commit themsleves to a firm decision on anything.

To Be Continued....

EDIBLE PLANT RECIPES

Karen Wiley Eberle has been kind enough to share her file of recipes which use wild plants. These recipes will be included as a regular column in the Newsletter. If anyone else in the Society has recipes they would like to share through this column, please send them to the editor.

Taraxacum officinale - "dandelion"

Dandelion Wine

1 gallon dandelion petals
1 gallon boiling water
4 oranges
1 lemon
4 lbs. sugar
1 yeast cake (compressed)
1 lb. chopped raisins
1 slice toast

Pick the flowers from the heads, throwing away the hollow stalks and the denuded heads. Place them in a crock or jar and poor the boiling water over them. Cover and leave for about 5 days, stirring several times during that period. Strain out the liquid and add sugar to it. Peel the oranges and the lemon and drop in the peel, then add the juices of these fruits and the chopped raisins. Boil all this for 20 min. in a preserving kettle and return it to the crock. Cool, place the yeast on the peice of toast and put it in. Cover and leave for about 3 days. Then decant the liquid into jars or bottles. Some say that the wine should be aged for at least one year befor using.

Calochortus nuttallii - "mariposa or sego lily"

Fried Mariposa Tubers in Sour Cream

1/2 cup wild onions, finely chopped
1 lb. mariposa tubers, thinly sliced
4 T. butter
1/4 cup dry bread crumbs
1/2 cup sour cream

Melt the butter in a heavy, stainless steel skillet over high heat. Add chopped onions and cook for 5 minutes until they are transparent but not brown. Add the sliced tubers and cook for another 5 minutes. Shake the pan from time to time so that the onions and tubers do not stick. When the tubers are a delicate brown, sprinkle the bread crumbs over them and toss lightly with a spatula. Beat the sour cream with a wisk for a min. then stir it into the skillet. Toss lightly until everything is well coated. Serve with meat or fish. Serves 4. (mushrooms may be added as well)

CONPS POSTERS

The first Colorado Native Plant Society poster was designed during the spring of 1980 by John Sorbie, internationally known poster artist and professor at Colorado State University.

The primary purpose of the poster is its use as a publicity vehicle for the Society; secondarily, sale of the poster is helping to defray its production costs. All Society members are asked to help distribute the poster for publicity purposes.

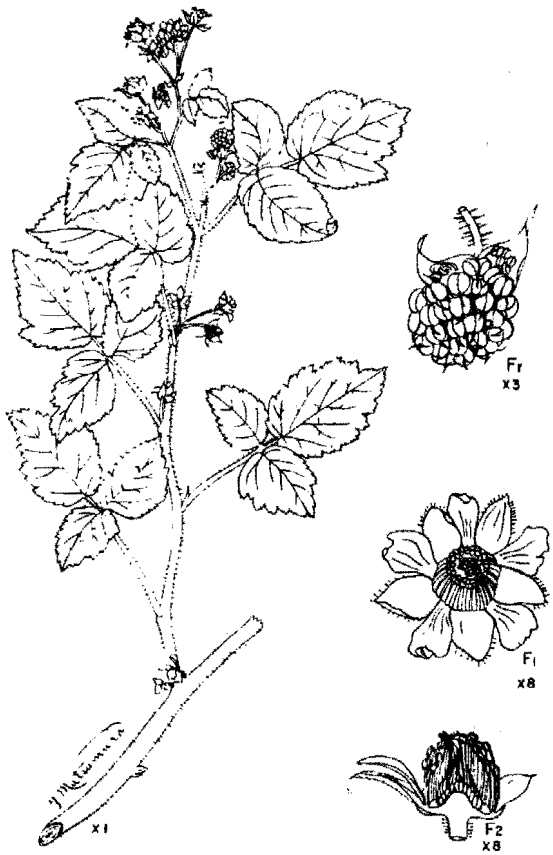
This can be done in either of two ways at no cost to the member or recipient:

(1) Provide the name of an agency or person who can and will display a poster in a public area; the poster will be sent directly to the address you provide.

(2) Provide the name and location of an agency where you personally will hang the poster, and we will send the poster to you.

Such agencies can include university departments, schools, libraries, environmentally oriented groups or businesses, etc. Of course, posters still may be purchased for personal use---- send a gift to all your friends!

Prices are: $3.00 each, or 3 for $8, or 5 for $10. For mailing to addresses within Colorado, please add 75¢ per poster up to a maximum of $2.25. For mailing to out of state addresses, postage and handling charges are $1.50 per poster up to a maximum of $4.50.



POSTER ORDER FORM

Please send CONPS poster(s) : ☐ to me personally for public display at the agency listed below.

☐ directly to the agency or person listed below.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Name

_____ _____ _____

Agency

_____ _____ _____

Address

_____ _____ _____

Please send _____ posters for my personal use. I enclose $_____ for posters, handling, and mailing.

Mail order form to:

CONPS POSTER
P. O. BOX 200
FORT COLLINS, CO 80522

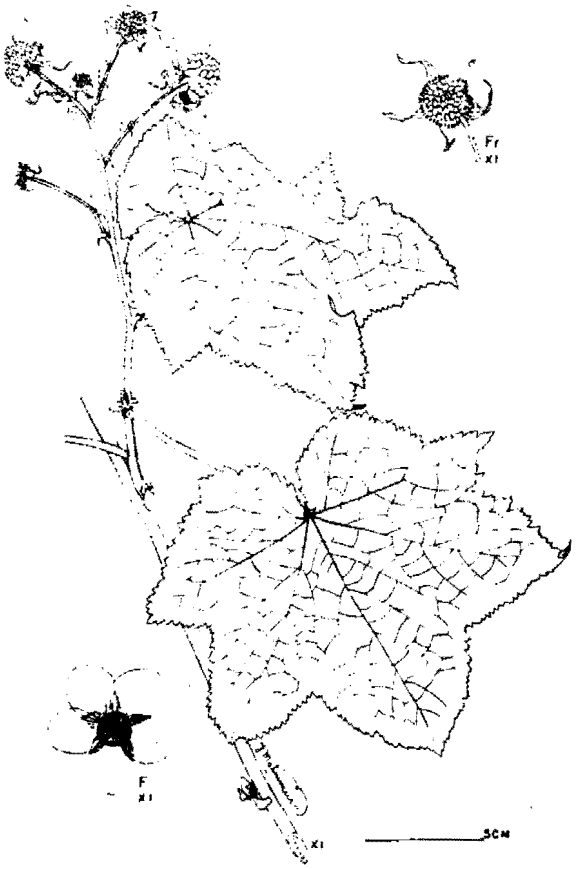
_____

Name

_____

Address

_____



LAST REMINDER!!!!

Membership dues are now payable for calendar year 1981. Your current dues status is indicated on the mailing label of this newsletter. If the label reads "PAID THRU *80" your dues are unpaid for this year. This will be the last issue of the newsletter you receive unless 1981 dues are paid.

ATTENTION FORT COLLINS AREA MEMBERS (and other CONPS members interested in Fort Collins Chapter activities): If you wish to be notified by mail of upcomming activities of the Ft. Collins Chapter, join the Chapter!

We have very little money, postage is expensive, and we can no longer afford to send meeting and field trip notices to all Fort Collins area addresses.

Members must indicate their desire for chapter affiliations each year in order for the chapter to receive its dues subvention from the Society's treasury.

Programs and field trips will continue to be announced in the Fort Collins "Coloradoan" and in the CONPS Newsletter. Programs are open to all to attend regardless of membership, but non-chapter members will have to rely on public notices to hear of them.

--- Myrna Steinkamp
Chairperson, CoNPS
Membership Committee

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Colorado Native Plant Society membership is on a calendar year basis, January 1 through December 30.
PLEASE ENCLOSE THIS FORM WITH YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL.

_____ NEW MEMBER

_____ RENEWAL

CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP:

_____ Individual, $8

_____ Family, $12

_____ Student, $4

_____ Retired, $4

_____ Organization, $25

_____ Supporting, $50

_____ Life, $250

In addition to my membership dues, I wish to make a donation of $_____ to further the purposes of the Society.

_____
Name

_____
Address

_____
City State ZIP

I wish to be a member of the following chapter:

_____ Fort Collins

(At present, there are no other active chapters.)

THE COLORADO NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION; DUES AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE TAX-DEDUCTIBLE.