

THE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF NEW MEXICO

Dear Friend,

This is the first newsletter of the newborn Native Plant Society of New Mexico. We hope in them not only to keep ourselves informed, but to provoke your thoughts about new directions the Society might take, and resources it might draw upon. The Society is modeled on Native Plant Societies in a number of other states. The people who urged its inception are interested in a number of different aspects of interest in the native flora of the state: the encouragement and proper use of native plant materials for landscaping, the aiding of enforcement of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and other laws which protect the endangered and threatened species of the state, and the development of educational materials and demonstration projects to help raise awareness of and appreciation for our native plants.

Our first organizational meeting was held in February in Santa Fe in spite of the maze of dirt roads in the dark, folks coming from as far as El Paso, Las Cruces and Albuquerque. It was an exploratory meeting, meant to discover what people would like from the Society. The following is a brief discussion of what emerged and was subsequently developed.

There is a great interest in field trips, and later discussions with our great naturalist Bill Issacs produced these suggestions for this summer's fare, proposed field trips to:

-- La Joya and Bosque del Apache on the Rio Grande for wetlands, perhaps in spring,
-- the Santa Fe ski basin for a spring wildflower tour;
-- Bandelier for spring mushroom trip
-- the Gila wilderness area in June
-- the Animas area in early summer for desert ecosystem
-- the Villanueva area near Las Vegas
-- the National Grasslands near Springer for grasses in mid-August
-- the Canillon area
-- the Manzanos Mountains
-- the Cochiti region in the fall
-- the Carlsbad area and Botanical Gardens

We are looking for fervent requests plus leaders to these and other areas of botanical interest. Suggestions?



At the next meeting, which Claudia and John Hubbard have consented to host--planned for the 20th of April, a Tuesday, at 7 p.m.--at 2097 Camino Lado; at the corner of Siringo, we plan to break into groups to pursue these interests, which emerged at the first meeting:

* the great interest in native plant materials for landscaping. There is a need to identify trees, shrubs, and grasses that are suitable for planting in our dry Southwest, particularly those which do not need quantities of water to sustain them. We are looking for people to work on compiling information on good natives to use, and good techniques to use for planting and care. We hope to publish individual sheets on natives, toward a goal of publishing a guide to native landscaping materials. We would also like to encourage the availability of these plants, many of which are exceptionally graceful and handsome, and most of which are difficult to obtain through traditional nurseries. We are looking for energy to instigate a native plant sale on the Plaza in early June to offer some of these difficult to find ornamental natives. Suggestions? Melissa Savage (in Santa Fe-983-1113) is a contact.

* the intense interest in the various laws which affect and protect native flora of the state. We would like to work toward sponsoring a one or two day workshop on that legislation--to explain the laws, State and Federal, to clarify which agencies are responsible, and to begin to delineate what informed amateurs and botanists can do to assist in monitoring the flora. Possibly we can expand the list of threatened plants if need be. Nan Nalder (983-8743 in Santa Fe) is a contact person.

* the admirable interest in developing materials to educate and inform about our natives. Slide shows, lectures, printed materials and photo collections would be much in demand. Particularly appropriate would be such materials, and guided tours, designed for the school systems. A good deal of materials and a wealth of slides already exist and need some devoted hands to arrange. Claudia Hubbard (988-5918 in Santa Fe) is the contact for offers and ideas.

* a number of juicy projects are waiting to be done. For example, the City park on Cerro Gordo Rd in Santa Fe which was for many years the sheriff's posse's pasture, is yet undeveloped, and the local neighborhood association would like it to remain without tennis courts etc. One good alternative is to plan it as a nature resource, to mark the plants, develop tours for school children and the like, which the Society could aptly do. Plus, as an offering at the next meeting, Bill Issacs will speak about the possibility of recreating on the Rio Grande, on a piece of land lent by a conservation group, a wetlands ecosystem. The Society could design and replant the plant materials that are apt, and monitor the progression of the growth, the reestablishment of fauna...an ambitious and delicious scheme.



* One of our most important tasks in our first year will be locating the human resources in our state who would like to further these and other aims of the Society. Search your acquaintances for people with extensive knowledge about a particular ecosystem, someone with lots of slides of natives, with lots of knowhow about planting natives, someone who just loves our native flora, etc. etc... In the face of the great gap of organized concern for native plants, we can and should establish ourselves as a reliable and informed organization on our native flora.

* One of our major and long-term objectives whould be the inventorying of the distribution of our indiginous plants. We should develop a master list and keep an inventory of what plants are where. This will aid inestimably in protecting rare plants, and will probably add delightful items such as keeping tract of the tree with the largest girth etc. We might usefully seek a grant to do an area ecological study, perhaps a range area might be most appropriate, with a eye to the stresses, recreational and other, that affect the botanical composition.

* And...all the pressing and ripe involvements that have not yet been mentioned.

Second Meeting -Native Plant Society

April 20 - Tuesday - 7 p.m.

At Claudia and John Hubbard's
2097 Camino Lado-at the corner of Siringo
Santa Fe, N.M.
Those who wish to see the Hubbard's wildflower garden come a bit early while there's still light



Bill Issacs speaking on and

illustrating

Rio Grande wetlands ecosystem and describing a project to recreate such an ecosystem by designing and replanting apt native plants.