



NEVADA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Rooting for Natives: Softwood and Semi-Hardwood Cuttings as a Propagation Tool

by Melissa Sinka

The relatively warm and disappointingly dry winter, followed by late season frost, has led to expectations of lower native seed production across Northern Nevada, making it seem as though native plant propagation could slow to a halt. Fortunately, that is far from the case! During the spring and early summer months, softwood cuttings, and throughout the active growing season, semi-hardwood cuttings, can provide an excellent and highly effective alternative for native plant cultivation.

First, what exactly are softwood and semi-hardwood cuttings? They are very similar: both are taken from green, current-season growth. Softwood growth is typically more tender and flexible, often producing shorter, more delicate shoots on the plant. These cuttings are usually collected in the spring through early summer, depending on the species and the climate (approximately April–June). Semi-hardwood cuttings are also flexible, but slightly more mature. They begin to firm up, develop a harder texture and will begin to develop woody characteristics. These are typically collected from spring through late summer, again depending on the species and climate.

Many Nevada native plants propagate readily from cuttings, particularly members of *Salicaceae* such as willows (*Salix* spp.) and cottonwoods (*Populus* spp.). These species naturally contain high levels of



Salix sp. Softwood Shoots ©Melissa Sinka

auxins (plant hormones that regulate growth and development), along with abundant undifferentiated cells (meristematic tissue) in their stems that can readily transform into roots when properly stimulated (Hartmann et al., 2011). In many cases, these plants seem almost eager to root, turning a simple cutting into a new plant with remarkable speed.

Other taxa that respond well to softwood and semi-hardwood propagation include shrubs such as *Rosa woodsii* (Wood's rose), *Ribes* spp. (currants and gooseberries), *Cornus sericea* (red-osier dogwood), *Sambucus* spp. (elderberry), and *Symphoricarpos* spp. (snowberries), as well as perennial forbs like *Penstemon* spp. (beardtongues), *Achillea millefolium* (common yarrow), and members of *Lamiaceae* such as *Monardella* spp. (coyote mints) and *Salvia* spp. (sage).

There are also a few taxa that may surprise you with their ability to root from cuttings, though they often require a bit more finesse and patience. Some include *Artemisia* spp. (sagebrush), *Chamaebatiaria millefolium* (fernbush), *Prunus andersonii* (desert peach), *Sphaeralcea* spp. (globemallows), and many more.

Knowing which species are good candidates is only half the equation, the next step is getting into the practical details of how to collect, prepare, and root cuttings successfully. Before heading into the field, it is important to assemble all necessary materials.

Some items to keep in a cuttings collection toolkit include:

- Gloves
- Pruning Shears
- Snipping Shears
- Isopropyl alcohol or other surface disinfectant
- Bucket or Jars
- Bleach
- Cooler

Timing and handling are also key. It is best to take cuttings in the morning while temperatures are still cool, as this helps preserve moisture in plant tissues and reduces transpiration stress, which will ultimately result in less wilting and more successful cuttings. Many suitable cuttings can be taken from plants already growing in your own garden or landscape. However, it is important to never collect plant material from land you do not own without the proper permission and permits. Collecting live plants or cuttings from wild populations for horticultural purposes is strongly discouraged. In addition to the potential for unintended harm to native plant populations, legal restrictions may apply depending on land ownership and the species being collected.

Before collecting, sanitize your pruning shears to prevent disease transmission to your mother plants. Also, collect only from healthy source plants, avoiding any with signs of disease or pests.

For softwood cuttings, material should generally be 2–5 inches long, while semi-hardwood cuttings are typically 3–6 inches long, or at least 3–4 nodes per cutting (University of Washington, n.d.). To prepare the basal end, make a clean cut just below a node, leaving no more than ¼ inch of stem beneath it (Santa Cruz County CNPS, 2020).

In the field, cuttings can be placed in a shallow bucket or jar of water and stored in a cooler inside the truck. This helps maintain turgidity; however, some practitioners report that this step is not always necessary depending on species and conditions.



Softwood Shoots in Cooler ©Melissa Sinka

When you are ready to “stick” your cuttings, you can first soak them in a diluted 1% bleach solution for 10 minutes, followed by a water rinse to stop bleach oxidation. This does not harm the cuttings but helps reduce the risk of disease and pest transfer between propagules and, ultimately, into the environment once plants are out planted.

Next, remove all basal leaves, flowers, buds, or side shoots, leaving only the terminal leaf. To encourage rooting, dip the basal end in a rooting hormone. There are several brands, formulations (powder, gel, etc.), and concentrations of indole-3-butyric acid (IBA), a synthetic auxin. Common products include Hormodin, Hortus, and Clonex. For most softwood and semi-hardwood cuttings, a concentration of 0.1–0.3% IBA is generally sufficient. Typically, 0.1% for species that are easy to root and 0.3% for species that are more challenging.



Prepared Shoot with Rooting Hormone ©Melissa Sinka

Cuttings should be placed in a well-draining substrate. A typical mix could be a 50/50 mix of vermiculite and perlite, though many successful protocols use combinations of perlite, peat, pumice, coco coir, and other materials, so it is worth experimenting with what is available to you. Maintain cuttings in a humid, stable environment with indirect light until rooting occurs.

Some species require frequent misting to prevent desiccation, while others, such as *Salvia*, *Artemisia*, or *Penstemon*, may be more prone to fungal issues or rot under overly wet conditions (Santa Cruz County CNPS, 2020). Close, regular monitoring is essential. Once cuttings have rooted, gradually reduce misting and begin hardening them off. Transplanting into the garden is typically delayed until the following spring (University of Washington, n.d.).



©Melissa Sinka

To determine whether the species you are interested in propagating from cuttings is a good candidate, there are several excellent resources you can consult to see if others have successfully done it before. One of my favorite references is the Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources (RNGR) Propagation Protocol Database (<https://npr.rngr.net/propagation/techniques>) which contains propagation information for a wide range of native plants. Calscape.org can also be a helpful starting point, simply search for your species and review the propagation notes section. You can also do a quick Google search to look for NRCS propagation guides, university extension publications, or even social media discussions where home gardeners and native plant enthusiasts share their propagation techniques and experiences. At the end of the day, if you're unsure whether a species is a good candidate for cuttings propagation, it's still worth giving it a try. Experimenting with native plant propagation often leads to new insights and can help uncover effective techniques that aren't always well documented.

Happy propagating!

Literature Cited

Hartmann, H. T., Kester, D. E., Davies, F. T., & Geneve, R. L. (2011). *Hartmann and Kester's Plant Propagation: Principles and Practices* (8th ed.). Prentice Hall.

Santa Cruz County Chapter of the California Native Plant Society. 2020. *Propagation Handbook*. <https://cruzcnps.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/PropagationHandbook-SantaCruzCountyCNPS-min.pdf>

University of Washington, Center for Urban Horticulture. n.d. *Propagation by cuttings*. <https://depts.washington.edu/propplnt/Chapters/Cuttings.pdf>

Botany by Houseboat: A Week on the Colorado River

By Alison Agneray

When Jerry Tiehm invites you on a houseboat trip down the Colorado River to collect plants for a week, you say yes. That is the only correct answer. Jerry is the Curator of the UNR Herbarium, and he planned the trip alongside Jan Nachlinger, both of whom coauthored “Nevada Plants: An Annotated Checklist of the State’s Botanical Diversity.” The general plan was to fill in a gap area lacking in herbarium vouchers. This 30-or-so mile stretch was almost completely devoid of specimens, indicating a lack of botanical surveys in the past, so Jerry and Jan assembled a team to go looking. In addition to me, the rest of the group was Matt Lavin, the retired herbarium curator for the Montana State University in Bozeman, and Marcus Hooker, who curates the UNLV herbarium and turned out to have very strong opinions about *Cryptantha*.

I flew into Las Vegas on March 13th and met Matt at baggage claim. We later met with Jerry and Jan outside the terminal in a big red pickup truck loaded with gear. They had previously removed plant presses from the roof just to get through the parking garage. Jerry immediately explained that the old plastic juice containers on the dashboard were solar-heated showers. This felt like an accurate preview of the week to come!

We then met Marcus at Trader Joe's to sort out food for shared meals and headed out to Lake Mead National Recreation Area to camp for the night. Jerry set up his portable plant press oven (an impressive contraption using a camping stove and custom-welded metal boxes). The wash near camp already had a gorgeous display of flowers in it. Good sign.

Getting on the Water

Jerry was up and moving by 6 a.m., which I quickly learned means everyone is up at 6 a.m. We drove down to Cottonwood Marina outside of Searchlight, Nevada through a cholla forest (I had never seen that many chollas in one place!).



©Alison Agneray

We met up with Marcus, picked up a 55-foot houseboat, loaded everything on board, and got our orientation from the marina staff. The orientation included one important piece of news: the boat was too big to go as far upriver as we had hoped. The Colorado narrows considerably above Willow Beach, and there were engine size limits. So, we adjusted on the fly, opting to push as far upriver as possible on day one, then work our way back down, stopping wherever things looked interesting. We got radioed at Willow Beach to turn around, found a good beach to anchor at, and started hiking.

Anchoring turned out to be straightforward: run the bow of the boat gently up onto a gravel beach, throw ropes out, hammer rebar stakes into the bank, tie off. Then hike. We did this at every stop for the rest of the week, and it worked every time, with one memorable exception that, at Jerry's request, will remain between us and the canyon wall.

The Canyons and What Grows in Them

The lower Colorado below Hoover Dam sits within the Mojave Desert, with a riparian zone along the water and hot spring microhabitats scattered through the side canyons. That combination means the flora is relatively diverse and after a good rain year, we had plenty of desert annuals in full bloom. Plus, we even came across 30-foot-high walls of ferns! Something you rarely get to see in the desert.

Our first canyon hike was a great success, with Jerry collecting new specimens of *Argythamnia serrata* (#20450), *Chylismia multijuga* (#20451), *Aristida purpurea* (#20452), *Mentzelia involucrata* var. *involucrata* (#20453), and *Bebbia juncea* var. *aspera* (#20454). Back at the boat, Jerry pressed the day's specimens on a folding table at the stern while the rest of us keyed things on the beach or inside the A/C'd boat on the couch. It was a good system. Later in the trip we found *Juncus acutus* var. *sphaerocarpus* (#20456) growing in stands taller than my head at a canyon mouth, which required clipping back catclaw acacia to even reach the trail. We found *Funastrum hirtellum* (#20458) twining through the catclaw and next to canyon ledges absolutely crawling with harvestmen.

Another personal favorite moment came at the end of a long hike on day four, when I brought a hunk of moss growing directly on a rock sitting in the river to Jan and she could not place it, so we made an official collection where she included me as a co-collector on the specimen. I know it's small, but being listed on a voucher alongside Jan is something I won't forget!

The Rest of It

We picked up a small motorboat midway through the trip, which changed the logistics considerably. Above Willow Beach, large vessels are not allowed, so the small skiff became the only way to reach the upper canyon sites. It was also just much faster than the houseboat, which meant Jerry and I had time to kill while Matt moved the big boat with Jan and Marcus upriver.



©Alison Agneray

We went fishing, discussed emergency survival scenarios, and debated the best wild edibles in a desert environment.

The hot spring canyons further upriver were something else entirely. Boy Scout Canyon was one of my personal favorites: a relatively narrow slot with warm water running ankle-deep along the floor the whole way in, walls oozing mineral water and salt, and *Adiantum capillus-veneris* (maidenhair fern, #20469) growing directly out of the seeping walls. I hiked it up in sandals and at two points there were ropes fixed to help you up and down the cascades. Jerry made both climbs with his plant press hooked over one arm. Here we also collected, *Cyperus involucratus* (umbrella sedge, #20468 and #20473), an ornamental sedge originally from Madagascar that has naturalized widely but apparently had not been reported for this stretch of river before.

By the last full day, the temperature had climbed above 100 degrees and the lower-elevation flora was starting to show it with annuals crisping and collections limited to shaded areas. We went swimming off the water slide at the back of the houseboat, which turned out to be the single best piece of equipment on the entire trip, in my humble opinion. We drove back to Reno the next day without really stopping, except for sandwiches, and I introduced Jan and Jerry to Radio Goldfield.

Here are the rest of the specimens added to Jerry's collection:

- 20455** *Pleurocoronis pluriseta*
- 20457** *Senecio mohavensis*
- 20459** *Tiquilia plicata*
- 20460** *Abronia villosa* var. *villosa*
- 20461** *Achyronychia cooperi*
- 20462** *Nama demissa*
- 20463** *Peucephyllum schottii*
- 20464** *Geraea canescens*
- 20465** *Salix gooddingii*
- 20466** *Eremothera refracta*
- 20467** *Psoralea fremontii* var. *attenuatus*
- 20470** *Eleocharis geniculata*
- 20471** *Parietaria obtusa*
- 20472** *Phoenix canariensis*
- 20474** *Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum*
- 20475** *Andropogon glomeratus* var. *scabriglumis*
- 20476** *Eleocharis geniculata*
- 20477** *Juncus torreyi*
- 20478** *Oligomeris linifolia*
- 20479** *Bebbia juncea* var. *aspera*
- 20480** *Chamaesyce polycarpa* var. *polycarpa*
- 20481** *Physalis crassifolia*
- 20482** *Cryptantha maritima*
- 20483** *Washingtonia robusta*
- 20484** *Abronia villosa* var. *villosa*



Featured plant: *Eriogonum umbellatum*, sulfur-flower buckwheat by Emma Wynn

Eriogonum umbellatum Torr., commonly known as sulphur-flower buckwheat or sulphur buckwheat, is native to western North America. Its range extends from California to Colorado and north into Canada. In Nevada, it is one of 79 species of *Eriogonum*, with 13 recognized varieties. The most common variety in the state is *E. umbellatum* var. *nevadense* Gand., which occurs in every county except Clark and Lincoln.

This species is highly variable and can be difficult to identify because individual plants differ widely in appearance. Growth forms range from small, low-growing mounds to larger, more erect shrub-like forms. This buckwheat is especially noted for its small sulphur-yellow flowers, which bloom from late spring into summer. The flowers are borne in compound umbels, up to 4 inches wide, at the tips of leafless stalks which reach up to 12 inches in height. Each umbel is subtended by a whorl of leaf-like bracts. Individual flowers are bell-shaped, up to 1/4 inch long, and have six petal-like lobes. They open sulphur-yellow to cream, then mature to orange-yellow and finally brown. The dried flowers remain attractive and are often valued in dried arrangements. The flowering stalks rise above low-growing basal mounds of leathery, spatula-shaped, gray-green leaves (each 1/2" to 1.5" long). Leaves appear both in a basal rosette below the primary flowering stalk and as whorls at the ends of short woody stems emanating from the woody plant base. Leaves acquire red tones in fall.

Sulphur-flower buckwheat attracts a wide variety of bees and other pollinators. It is a larval host and nectar source for several butterflies including the lupine blue butterfly, *Plebejus lupini*. The seeds are an important food source for many species of birds and small mammals. Quail, sage-grouse and deer eat the leaves.



Eriogonum umbellatum in Reno yard at 5,750 ft elevation. ©Emma Wynn

It is an excellent landscape plant, offering year-round appeal and tolerating sun, heat, drought, and wind. I have several in my Reno-area yard; most stay low and form beautiful cushions covered with bright yellow flowers at this time of year. One plant grows a bit taller, with long flower stems that turn rusty in fall and glow in the winter sun. My plants came from several sources: a couple were gifts from friends, one came from the Washoe Conservation Nursery, one self-seeded, and I bought 'Kannah Creek', a cultivar of *Eriogonum umbellatum* var. *aureum*, from High Country Gardens.

Eriogonum umbellatum is not the only buckwheat suitable for the home landscape, I have at least half a dozen perennial buckwheats in my yard. I also allow annual buckwheats to seed themselves around the yard as they provide great winter interest!

Resources:

- Tiehm, A. & J. Nachlinger. 2025. Nevada Plants: An Annotated Checklist of the State's Botanical Diversity.
- Missouri Botanical Plant Finder
- USDA NRCS Plant Guide

2026 Nevada Native Plant Society Rare Plant Workshop

by Joshua Lovera

In March, the Nevada Native Plant Society's Rare Plant Committee moderated its semi-annual workshop which was held at the Department of Interior office in Reno, NV. The workshop provides a space for botanists, academic researchers, and land managers to gather and discuss the status of Nevada's rare plant species. This year we had 70+ individuals representing federal, state, and local agencies as well as academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and botanical experts in the private industry.

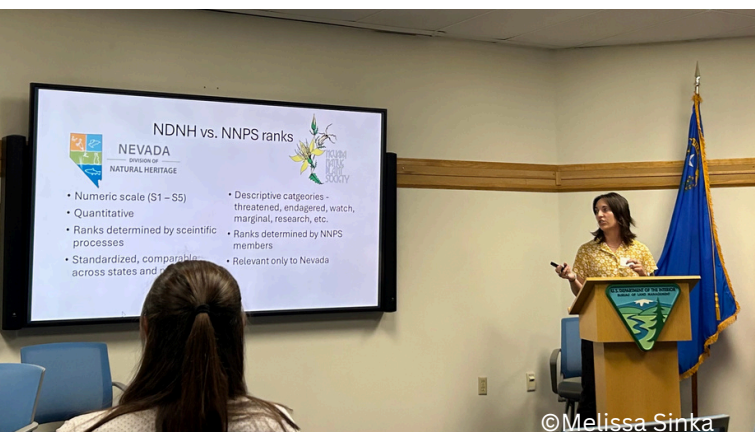
One of the goals of the workshop is to review species assigned to the NNPS Research List. This list, which can be found on the Nevada Division of Natural Heritage's (NDNH) website using the [Explore Species Tool](#), is comprised of plant species that the Rare Plant Committee has determined to be in need of further information to adequately assess the status of that species in Nevada. One example of a species discussed this year is *Polemonium nevadense* (Nevada Jacob's Ladder). In Nevada this species is only known from the Santa Rosa Mountain Range in northern Nevada, however to committee's knowledge there has never been a systematic survey of the species to determine how prevalent the species may be, or if it also occurs in nearby areas such as the Montana Mountains.



Iliamna bakeri ©Denali Lowder

By leaving this species on the Research List we hope to encourage workshop attendees, graduate students, or other NNPS members to gather more information about this species such as the extent of its range, pollinators species, and what threats exist for this species habitat. The NNPS committee can also assign species as Endangered, Threatened, Watch, and/or Marginal. These NNPS statuses are used to inform both state and federal agency policies. Once again, all these species lists and their definitions can be found on the NDNH website using Species List Search function on the [Explore Species Tool](#) webpage. If you ever need help finding or understanding this information, please email contactndnh@heritage.nv.gov.

This year we also discussed several species that were recently documented in Nevada including *Iliamna bakeri* (Baker's globemallow), *Malacothamnus orbiculatus* (Tehachapi bushmallow), and *Primula incana* (Jones' primrose). The fact that each year we are still documenting new species in Nevada just goes to show you that our beautiful state is full of surprises if you are willing to look for them.



©Melissa Sinka

The Rare Plant Workshop also provides attendees with the opportunity to present their research and observations to a large audience of Nevada's natural resource professionals. This year we heard presentations about Nevada's relatively low density of herbarium records compared to surrounding states, different methods to survey for rare plants in wetland environments, seed ecology and propagation of rare Mojave Desert species, and updates on the status of several protected plant species such as *Eriogonum tiehmii* (Tiehm's buckwheat), *Zeltnera namophila* (spring-loving centaury), *Astragalus geyeri* var. *triquetrus* (Threecorner milkvetch), *Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *sesquimetralis* (Sodaville milkvetch), *Arctomecon californica* (Las Vegas bearboppy), and *Penstemon albomarginatus* (white-margined penstemon).



Erythranthe carsonensis ©James Bailey



Zeltnera namophila ©Matt Berger

This year's workshop was concluded with a field trip to Prison Hill Recreation Area in Carson City to look for *Erythranthe carsonensis* (Carson Valley monkey flower). This species is currently under review by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for listing under the Endangered Species Act following a petition by the Center for Biological Diversity. Not only were we lucky enough to find the plants we were looking for we also found another uncommon monkey flower *Diplacus ovatus* (Steamboat monkey flower).

I would like to take a moment to thank our friends at the Department of Interior for providing us with a place to meet as well as everyone who presented their work at this past workshop. Lastly, if you are Botanist or Natural Resources Professional in the state of Nevada and would like to be invited to future NNPS Rare Plant Workshops please email me at rareplants@nvnp.org with your name, organization, and job title.

Conservation News:

Supporting the NDF State Conservation Nurseries

by Hannah Bishop-Moser

The Nevada Department of Forestry (NDF) started the State Conservation Nursery Program in 1957. They grow native and adaptive species in nurseries in Washoe Valley and Las Vegas. These plants are used for conservation purposes. As of 2025 they can be purchased by all home owners.

Funding: Funding for these programs have been received through a mix of state legislative appropriations, federal grants, and direct program revenues. Now, legislators are deciding whether or not funding for these nurseries should be through the general budget. NVNPS strongly supports this legislation. The state nurseries not only serve our ecosystems through statewide restoration efforts, but also the people of Nevada by providing native plant materials for windbreaks, managing weeds, mitigating fire impacts, and protecting our water.

Positive Effects: Funding NDF nurseries through the general fund would provide stability to the program. This allows for a greater ability to plan ahead, making more efficient, time saving, and money saving decisions in the long run. It would reduce the time commitment of the staff going towards acquiring grant funding, allowing more time towards nursery operations. Additionally, it would allow money for additional staff and resources to grow the program. Overall, this would increase the positive effects of the program.

A Win for Wildlife: The NDF plant nursery program protects wildlife in a way that other programs can not. Many of the 250 different species can not be purchased anywhere else. Providing native and adaptive plants for restoration has far reaching effects. The weed management, fire management, water management, and fire breaks from these plants work together to create a more resilient and healthy landscape.

How to Support: NVNPS is showing support for funding NDF State Conservation Nurseries through the general fund in an official letter to Nevada state representatives. If you would like to help, there are 3 main ways:

1. Write to your local legislators and let them know how important the State Nurseries are to you. Visit tinyurl.com/StateNurseries for draft language to write or call your local representatives.
2. Purchase plants from these nurseries. For more information, visit <https://forestry.nv.gov/natural-resource-management/state-conservation-nurseries>.
3. Spread the word! Let others know about these nurseries and all the good they do.

Native plants are part of Nevada's pride. NDF State Conservation Nurseries have a myriad of positive effects on Nevada's landscape, safety, and livelihood. Support of these programs would have far reaching effects. The general fund would ensure these positive effects for now, and in the future.



Eyes in the Field, Stories From Seeds of Success

by Lily Rice

In a state with as much public land as Nevada- 84% of Nevada's land is federally owned- and much of that land is remote and hard to get to by conventional means, it's no wonder there are still discoveries awaiting eager botanists to stumble upon them. Thankfully, there are dedicated groups of people like the Nevada Native Plant Society who are hard-set at scouring the nooks and crannies of this state, or, in my case, non-profit agencies that bring in fresh perspectives from all over the U.S. to collect seeds for wildland restoration



Sean Britain posing for the camera as he scouts *Penstemon palmeri*. ©Lily Rice

I am very lucky to be completing a second field season with the Great Basin Institute. Our program uses the Seeds of Success (SOS) protocol to find and collect native ecotypes of various forb, graminoid, and shrub species for the purpose of ramping up wild-type seeds to restore degraded habitats. Last season I partnered with the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. This year, I am stationed within the Bureau of Land Management's Ely district, which covers most of the calcareous mountain section of the state, from the southern portion of the Ruby Mountains to Caliente. Eight days at a time my field partner and I whittle away our precious hours in deep backcountry, armed with our determination and experience.

This position gives us the privileged ability to monitor this region of the state for how plant populations are managing across a variety of habitats, disturbance regimes, and climatic factors. With this, there are plenty of anecdotes I have the pleasure of sharing with the rest of you.

So far, this has been an odd year for the state, although I dare say this oddity is becoming normative; it seems climate change has made chaos the seasonal zeitgeist. From the land managers at Ruby Lake Wildlife Refuge to the Caliente Field Office, the story is similar: a warm, dry winter and early spring, followed by a cold snap as the early spring blooms began to grow. Below-average snowpack on the mountains spells a stressful year for the communities that depend on the life-giving meltwater. For Ruby Lake, they are hoping that the few prior years of above-average snowpack can provide enough of a buffer to maintain water levels in the marsh. Down in Mojave-influenced Caliente, land managers are concerned about whether their populations of Ponderosa Pines will put out cones this year or hold off for better conditions another year; recent wildfires have put a strong management need on new saplings down in the Mojave transition zone. On the Southern Snake Range, the eastern slopes are struggling to push out any new growth and any plant that dares to challenge this dry year has been coming out more stunted than usual.

And yet, it is not all doom and gloom. Like all things in the Intermountain Region, it depends where you are and when. While some valleys resemble a scene from the famous Australian apocalypse series, Mad Max, other areas are flush with life. On the southwestern slopes of the South Snake Range, communities of grasses are already pushing out their spikes, and for my field partner and I, pushing forward the hopes of a large, viable collection.

In the nearby Spring Valley and semi-distant White River Valley, the S3 (vulnerable) *Phlox griseola* ssp. *tumulosa* is putting off an impressive array of diminutive blooms, alongside an equally impressive population of (S3) *Lepidium nanum* in the latter valley.



Lepidium nanum & *Phlox griseola* ssp. *tumulosa* competing for space. ©Lily Rice

Down south near Hiko, *Penstemon palmeri*, *Cirsium neomexicanum*, and *Fallugia paradoxa* are erupting in a wonderful concert of blooms. In this same area, land managers are thrilled to see that a population of *Coleogyne ramosissima* have reestablished post-burn, fighting off an influx of the dreaded cheatgrass, for now. In restoration, it is the little wins that keep you moving forward.

To the East near Pioche, rolling drainages intoxicate the air with the strong perfumery of *Purshia stansburyana*, some of which are beginning to reveal their feathery styles in fruit. Underneath these towering shrubs, *Rhinotropis subspinosa*, *Calochortus flexuosa*, *Centrostegia thurberi*, and *Dalea searlsiae* are acting as if this region of the United States is not in a drought, that is in all likelihood, about to get worse.



Centrostegia thurberi ©Lily Rice

On a final personal note, my return to Nevada and the start of the hitch season has been filled with wonder and amazement at this fantastic state. The calcareous mountains section is a wonderful place to call home for the next five months as the hitch season rolls on. Although, despite the wonder and amazement, it wouldn't truly be field work if something unusual didn't happen. In this previous hitch, my tent zipper stopped functioning- which gave my nighttime rest a wonderful "al fresco" sort of feeling- as if I was inviting the Nevadan wilderness in to join me in my rest. This is exactly what happened. When I went to bed on my sixth night in the field I was greeted with a strange "thwacking" sound nearby my tent. Assuming it to be a critter trying to enter my nylon domicile, I strapped on my flickering headlamp to scare away whatever would-be siege animal. Upon not seeing anything outside, my eyes glanced down to see a nine-inch huddled shape cowering behind my pillow, already having entered my tent. After a minor panic that involved me trying to burst through my zipped-up rain fly like I was the Kool-Aid-Man, I managed to coax the rodent out. I believe it's time to buy a new tent.



©Lily Rice

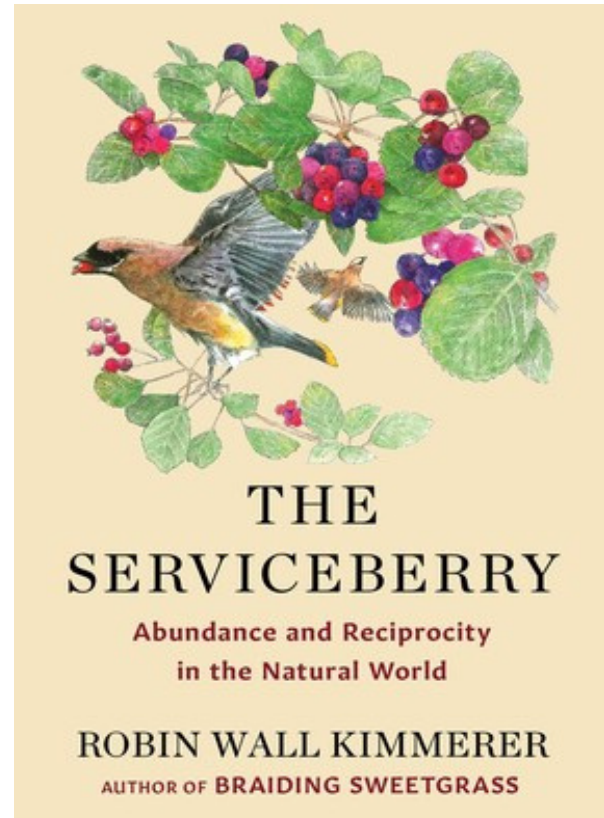
Book Review:

The Serviceberry by Robin Wall Kimmerer (2024)

by Joshua Lovera

In 2024 Robin Wall Kimmerer, the well-known author of *Braiding Sweet Grass* and *Gathering Moss*, quietly released her third book, *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*. Once again Dr. Kimmerer brings her experience as a botanist, professor, mother, and member of the Potawatomi tribe to examine the natural world and lessons we can take away from these observations. As the name would suggest, this book uses a particular serviceberry tree as the nucleus from which the rest of the book takes guidance. All plants which share the common name of “serviceberry” are members of the *Rosaceae* family and belong to the genus *Amelanchier*. Here in Nevada, we have four taxa that share in that name: Saskatoon serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia* var. *alnifolia*), dwarf serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia* var. *pumila*), pale serviceberry (*Amelanchier pallida*), and Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*). However, depending on where you are from you may be more familiar with Juneberry, Saskatoon, shadbush, shadwood, sarvisberry, or sugarplum to name just a few of the synonyms for serviceberry. The tree that Robin Wall Kimmerer discusses in this book is named both using the common name of Saskatoon, which has its origin in the Cree language, and using the Potawatomi name Bozakim, meaning “the best of berries”.

In this book, the tree producing the “best of berries” belongs to Dr. Kimmerer’s neighbors who own small “pick your own produce” farm where she has been invited to fill her bucket with berries. While picking the berries she observes the many birds who are also filling their bellies with the same fruit. The tree, which has graciously provided these Bozakim as a “gift” for the birds will then have its seeds dispersed far and wide. In the same way the tree has also gifted pollen and nectar to the



bees, dead leaves to the fungi, and shelter to many more creatures. The bees will then give the gift of honey, the fungi will give nutrients to the soil, all the animals that interact with the tree will continue passing along these gifts in the form of energy one way or another so that the whole ecosystem benefits.

This cycle of gift giving to support the community as whole is what Robin Wall Kimmerer refers to as a “gift economy”, although throughout the book you may also see this idea translated by a biologist, economist, psychologist, and other thinkers as a “culture of gratitude”, “ecological economics”, “doughnut economics”, “circular economies”, and the “honorable harvest”. It is here that we find the heart of this book. In this slim, barely 100 pages, book Dr. Kimmerer briefly examines how traditional indigenous knowledge, along with biological

science, and economic theory could create a system which helps support more people in way that is more environmentally responsible and caring toward our community.

Much in the same way that Dr. Kimmerer may walk away with her pail of serviceberries filled with gratitude toward her neighbors and then pass that gratitude/energy along directly by helping her neighbors weed their farm or indirectly by advocating for farmland protections. There is a lot of discussion in this book about the difficulty of scaling an economy where the currency is gifts instead of cash, but that's not really the point. If we all embraced this gift economy more in our daily lives then cumulative effect would still ripple outwards. I want to give you more everyday examples of the "gift economy" that this book discusses: little free libraries-in fact public libraries as well- clothing swaps, repair cafes, opensource software, the fact that Wikipedia exist is through the effort of thousands of volunteers, cooperative farms, food pantries, and these are just a few examples.



Amelanchier utahensis fruit ©Caleb Stroh

If you are looking for a light read this summer, then *The Serviceberry* is an excellent choice that will challenge you to consider how you interact with your community and the way in which you can pass along the energy of gratitude to others. Also, if you find this work interesting this book also acts as a suggested reading list of other books, articles, and publications by the biologists, economists, ecopsychologists, authors, and other people that Robin Wall Kimmerer reached out while exploring the world of the "gift economy".

Lastly, I want to leave you with **Robin Wall Kimmerer's guidelines for an Honorable Harvest:**

- Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you can take care of them.
- Introduce yourself. Be accountable as the one who comes asking for a life.
- Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer.
- Never take the first one. Never take the last.
- Take only what you need.
- Take only that which is given.
- Never take more than half. Leave some for others.
- Harvest in way that minimizes harm.
- Use it respectfully. Never waste what you have taken.
- Share.
- Give thanks for what you have been given.
- Give a gift in reciprocity for what you have been given.
- Give a gift in reciprocity for what you have taken.
- Sustain the ones who sustain you and the Earth will last for forever.

Upcoming Events - June & July 2026

NVNPS Programs

In 2026 NVNPS will host seven in-person programs, held at 7:00 PM on February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, September 3, October 1, and November 5. Programs are open to everyone and available via Zoom, with in-person meetings in Reno and Henderson. Social time begins at 6:30 PM for informal connection and refreshments.

See you at our next program in September!

NVNPS Field Trips and Outreach Events

Find the latest updates on field trips and outreach events here:

<https://www.nvnps.org/events-1>

Overnight Field Trip: Toiyabe Range (Kingston Canyon)

Saturday, June 27, 2026 | 8:00 AM – Sunday, June 28, 2026 | 6:00 PM

Join us for an overnight field trip in the Toiyabe Range. We will be camping in Kingston Canyon and exploring several sites in the area. Additional details will be shared closer to the date.

Field Trip: Mt Rose Interpretive Loop

Sunday, July 19, 2026 | 8:30 AM–12:00 PM

Join us on one of our favorite short, flower-filled trails. If timed correctly, we may see *Menyanthes trifoliata* in bloom. Additional details will be posted closer to the date.

Field Trip: Lake Park Plant Walk

Saturday, July 25, 2026 | 9:00 AM–11:00 AM

Join us for a guided plant ID walk at the One Truckee River River-Friendly Living Demonstration Garden at Lake Park, including plant identification in both the garden and surrounding park.

Special Events

Penstemon Society Meeting

Friday, June 12, 2026 | 4:00 PM – Monday, June 15, 2026 | 5:00 PM

Flagstaff, Arizona will host the 2026 joint meeting of the Arizona Native Plant Society (ANPS) and the American Penstemon Society.

More information and Registration:

<https://penstemons.org/index.php/annual-meetings>

Eriogonum Society Meeting

Thursday, July 9, 2026 | 2:00 PM – Sunday, July 12, 2026 | 3:00 PM

The 2026 Eriogonum Society annual meeting will be held in the botanically diverse Siskiyou-Klamath region of southwestern Oregon and northwestern California, based near Selma. Field excursions will explore surrounding botanical hotspots extending to Crescent City and Mount Ashland, with additional visits planned to areas such as Rough & Ready and Eight Dollar Mountain Botanical Areas.

More information:

<https://eriogonum.community/meetings/annual-meeting-2026-selma-oregon/>



Penstemon linarioides Flagstaff, AZ ©mycotajohn

Classes and Workshops

Basic Sunflower Identification Class

Tuesday, July 7, 2026 | 8:00 AM – Thursday, July 9, 2026 | 5:00 PM

University of Nevada, Reno Herbarium (Fleischmann Agriculture Building, Room 300G)

This three-day short course covers the taxonomy and identification of the sunflower family (*Asteraceae*), emphasizing terminology, dissection techniques, and the use of botanical keys. Participants will learn how to identify approximately 60 genera, as well as methods for collecting, pressing, and preparing specimens for reference or verification. The course is designed for beginner to intermediate botanists and may be taken for 1 unit of optional academic credit through UNR (additional fees apply).

Instructor: Arnold (Jerry) Tiehm, M.S., Great Basin Flora Specialist

Contact: atiehm@unr.edu | 775-742-9180

Class size is limited to 30 participants.

Registration is required by emailing the instructor directly.

Native Plant Sales

NDF Washoe Nursery – Seasonal Opening

Starting Thursday, April 30, 2026 through June 6th, 2026 | Thursdays–Saturdays | 9:30 AM–3:00 PM

Browse native plants grown for Nevada's climate. Open full-time in May and June; available by appointment after June until fall.

Location: 885 Eastlake Blvd, New Washoe City, NV 89704

NDF Las Vegas Nursery - Open to Public

Monday–Thursday, 8:00 AM–2:00 PM |

Fridays by appointment

Native plants for sale, locally grown and adapted.

Location: 9600 Tule Springs Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89131

Volunteer Events

America 250 Volunteer Project – Tree Planting at Wild Horse

Saturday, June 6, 2026 | 9:00 AM–12:00 PM

Help plant trees throughout Wild Horse State Recreation Area as part of a beginner-friendly volunteer restoration event. Registration is required.

More information:

<https://parks.nv.gov/events/america-250-volunteer-project-tree-planting-at-wild-horse>

McFarland Spring Invasive Plant Removal

Thursday, June 11, 2026 | 8:00 AM–4:00 PM

Participate in habitat restoration by removing invasive plants in the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area at the Bonanza Trailhead. Registration is required.

More information:

https://www.nevadawilderness.org/calendar_of_events

Tahoe Forest Stewardship Day

Saturday, June 13, 2026 | 9:00 AM–12:00 PM

Join a restoration project at Marlette Creek, including planting and follow-up care from previous restoration efforts.

https://volunteer.keeptahoeblue.org/need/detail/?need_id=1224929

Volunteer Planting Trees along the Truckee River – Brodhead Park

Saturday, July 11, 2026 | 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Help plant native trees along the Truckee River at Brodhead Memorial Park while learning about local riparian species and restoration efforts. RSVP information coming soon.

More information:

<https://www.onetruckeeriver.org/volunteer-for-the-truckee-river>

Society updates

Summer events in full swing

The Nevada Native Plant Society has kicked off its field trip and outreach season with great momentum. Thank you to everyone who has participated in a field trip or volunteered at an outreach event so far this year!

One of our annual outreach highlights is the Wilbur D. May Arboretum Plant Sale in Reno. What began years ago as an informational booth has grown into a popular native plant sale as demand for locally adapted species continues to increase. Thanks to the efforts of members John Weiser, Charlie Duncan, Emma Wynn, and Hannah Bishop-Moser, NVNPS offered more than 30 species of native plants this year. John alone grew over 200 plants from seed, helping make this our largest selection to date.



Song Dog Field Trip 2026 ©Brianna Kramer

On May 9th, twelve participants visited the Song Dog Native Plant Nursery, a facility that supports large-scale restoration projects throughout the Mojave Desert. Attendees toured the nursery's growing areas, laboratory, and seed storage facilities while learning about native seed collection, propagation, and restoration efforts. The group also visited a nearby restoration site where native shrubs, including creosote bush and white bursage, have been successfully established. If you are interested in becoming a nursery volunteer or volunteer for the Lake Mead area in general, check out

<https://www.nps.gov/lake/getinvolved/volunteer.htm>



Christmas Tree Pass Field Trip 2026 ©Brianna Kramer

On May 2, seven NVNPS members explored Christmas Tree Pass in Lake Mead National Recreation Area. The 17 mile scenic route through the culturally significant Spirit Mountains showcased unique montane species considered native only in the Southernmost tip of Nevada, including flowering *Nolina parryi* (Parry's beargrass). The trip also included visits to Grapevine Canyon, named after the native (*Vitis arizonica*), home to thousands of petroglyphs, and Telephone Cove, where participants were treated to the unexpected sight of spring-blooming *Psoralea argophylla* covered with pollinators.

Welcome new members!

A special thank you to our new members who joined since April 1st, 2026

- Ambre Chaudoin, Las Vegas
- William Sonnenburg, Boise ID
- Michael Meinert, Reno
- Leah Tucker, Las Vegas
- Leandra Jordan, Las Vegas
- Scott McKenzie, Carson City
- Ryan Sharrer, Reno
- Spencer Hurt, Grand Lake CO
- Cindy Rose, Las Vegas
- Peter Maddy, Reno
- Steve Fram, Berkeley CA
- Joan Traver, Reno

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- Vice President: Alison Agneray, aagneray@gmail.com
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- Cory King
- Lara Derasary
- Hermi Hyatt
- Cody Ernst-Brock
- Brianna Kramer

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- Conservation: Hannah Bishop-Moser
- Outreach:
 - N. Nevada: **Vacant**
 - S. Nevada: Brianna Kramer and Hermi Hyatt
- Field Trips,
 - N. Nevada: Christopher Mackessy,
 - S. Nevada: Brianna Kramer and Hermi Hyatt
- Grants: Jim Morefield, grants@nvnp.org
- Horticulture: John Weiser and Charlie Duncan
- Membership Coordinator: Alison Agneray
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- UNR Herbarium Curator: Arnold Tiehm
- UNLV Curator: Marcus Hooker
- Programs: programs@nvnp.org
 - N. Nevada: Sarah Kulpa
 - S. Nevada: Marcus Hooker
- Publications: Arnold Tiehm
- Rare Plants: Joshua Lovera, rareplants@nvnp.org
- Social media: Emma Wynn & Sarah Kulpa, social@nvnp.org
- Webmaster: Patrick Silbey, psilbey@gmail.com

