

Colorado Native Plant Society



NEWSLETTER

Volume III Numbers 5 & 6

September-December 1979

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

OFFICERS 1979/1980

President: Lloyd Hayes
Vice President: Scott Peterson
Secretary: Sue Martin
Treasurer: Walt Ruzzo

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ann Armstrong Lloyd Hayes
Miriam Denham Robert Heapes
Virginia Dionigi Sue Martin
Tom Eamon Scott Peterson
Hugo Ferchau Mark Phillips
Walt Ruzzo

CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence and inquiries regarding the activities of the Society should be addressed to Sue Martin, USDA Crops Research Lab, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523

COMMITTEES

Education: Virginia Dionigi
Horticulture & Rehabilitation: Mark Phillips
Legislative: vacant
Membership: Myrna Steinkamp
Publications: Scott Peterson
Threatened & Endangered: Bill Harmon

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS AND INFORMATION

Myrna Steinkamp, USDA Crops Research Lab, Colorado State University, Fort Collins 80523

SCHEDULE OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

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

The CONPS Newsletter is sent to all other Native Plant Societies in exchange for theirs. Nonmembers may subscribe to the Newsletter for \$ 4.00.

NEWSLETTER

EDITOR: Dieter H. Wilken, Dept. of Botany & Plant Pathology, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 80523.

The editor seeks articles of interest to all aspects of Society activities. Such articles should not generally exceed 4 typewritten, double-spaced pages, although consideration will be given to longer articles if space permits.

Deadlines for the 6 bimonthly newsletters are the last day of January, March, May, July, September, and November.

COLORADO NATURAL AREAS PROGRAM

After months of negotiating, interviewing, training and travelling, the Natural Heritage Inventory of Colorado is a reality. The opening of the Natural Heritage office at 1726 Champa Street, Denver marks the culmination of two years of effort on the part of staff members from the Department of Natural Resources, the Natural Areas Council and the Nature Conservancy. Other important contributions have been made by the Colorado State Legislature, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, The U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Office of Surface Mining.

The Natural Heritage Inventory is an ambitious project, its aim being to identify and locate relatively undisturbed examples of native plant communities, plants and animals of special concern, special habitats, aquatic systems and geologic features.

Information will be gathered from public and private sources, and will be available, upon appropriate request, to a variety of public and private agencies. Future analysis of the data will identify high priority sites for protection, research and education as well as assisting in land use decisions.

Four researchers will be conducting the inventory. They are: Julie McClellan (geologist), Greg McArthur (plant ecologist), Beth Lapin (zoologist and data manager), and Lou Vincent (Program Coordinator). These staff members already have completed their first task of revising the classification system and are now focusing their efforts on data gathering with respect to the northwestern and western Colorado counties.

CNAP now has an official slide show accompanied by a taped narration. Both slides and tapes are available for public programs. The slides are also available in company with a speaker with program equipment. For further information, contact Mary Hupp (303-839-3337).

CNAP now has 22 registered sites throughout Colorado, six of which have been officially designated as Colorado Natural Areas.

PROPOSED FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Habitat preservation is the key to survival of endangered species. Thus Senate Bill 1842 The NATIONAL HERITAGE POLICY ACT, introduced on 28 September by Senator Henry Jackson for the Administration, is of special interest. It would establish both Natural Heritage and Historic Preservation Programs in the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service of the Department of Interior. They would work with states to identify and preserve appropriate areas on both federal and non-federal lands. Financial help in planning and acquisition would be extended to natural areas. Natural heritage would include but not be limited to terrestrial and aquatic communities, landforms, geologic features and habitats of endangered native species.

A packet of information on this bill is available from Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus, Dept. of Interior, Washington D.C. 20240

Widespread misunderstanding and lack of concern for preserving endangered species is evident at all levels of the current political scene. Only a form informed public seems likely to help. Another new bill, House Bill 5844 introduced by Rep. Carl Pursell of Michigan, thus merits our attention. This WILD (wildlife information and learning development) BILL would channel funds through the Office of Endangered Species to educational and non-profit groups to increase public knowledge and understanding about native species.

Ask Rep. Pursell for a copy, support its passage and ask to be kept informed regarding its progress. Address: House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515.

— Alice Q Howard
for the California Native Plant Society

NEW BOOK FOR NATIVE PLANT ENTHUSIASTS

George Kelly's new paperback entitled SHRUBS FOR THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS offers much for the gardener interested in plants adaptable to the arid and cold climate of the Rocky Mountains. Amply illustrated, this book provides expert comments on the growth and establishment of over 250 species, of which a large proportion are native

to the American West. Of particular interest are the outline illustrations of whole plants; these provide considerable aid to the landscaper in designing a garden. This text is well worth the investment of \$ 8.25, which includes postage and handling, and serves as an admirable supplement to George's TREES FOR THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS. It is available from the author, 14663 County Road "G", Cortez, CO 81321

THE YAMPA BEARDTONGUE

The Yampa Beardtongue, Penstemon yampaensis Penland, a Colorado endemic, derives part of its common name from the fact that it has been found to occur only within the Yampa River drainage. To my knowledge, collections of this interesting caespitose Beardtongue have been made only in Moffat County, between the general area of Maybell to Elk Springs and Greystone. The term "Beardtongue" refers to the conspicuous, hairy, golden staminode or sterile stamen, which is exerted from the corolla throat.

Its habitat is characterized by a sandy, alluvial soil and such common species as Sagebrush (Artemisia), Ricegrass (Oryzopsis), Rabbitbrush (Chrysothamnus) and Skyrocket Gilia (Ipomopsis). The caespitose or acaulescent nature of this perennial readily lends itself to the practice of "belly botany". The closer one is to the ground the better the chances of finding it. Photographing this attractive plant requires that one lies on his stomach, a few inches from the flower.

The lilac to bluish flower is 15-18 mm long. In the MANUAL OF THE PLANTS OF COLORADO by Harrington, Penstemon yampaensis would key out as P. caespitosus. Note that the Yampa Beardtongue was described by Penland in 1958, several years after Harrington published the "Manual".

A closely related species, P. acaulis Williams is found in Daggett County, Utah and Sweetwater County Wyoming. Thus it might be expected to occur in the northwest corner of Colorado.

I would be very interested to know if anyone has knowledge of its occurrence in the state of Colorado.

The following key provides a way of separating the three species, once one has arrived at P. caespitosus in Harrington's Manual:

Plants caulescent..... P. caespitosus

Plants acaulescent.....

Leaves essentially linear, 1-1.5 mm wide, 10-20 mm long; flowers 1-2 per floriferous shoot; corolla 14-16 mm long, blue..... P. acaulis

Leaves oblanceolate, 2-4 (5) mm wide, 15-25 (30) mm long; flowers 4-6 per ultimate floriferous shoot; corolla 15-18 mm long, lilac to bluish-lilac..... P. yampaensis

Two members of the CO NPS, Elizabeth Painter and Sandy Emrick, have submitted a Status Report to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, proposing P. yampaensis as a threatened species. Their reasoning for the status report appears to be based on the limited range of the species. The proposed CROSS MOUNTAIN DAM, which could flood habitat and encourage increased activity, was cited as one potential threat in addition to grazing. In his description of P. yampaensis in 1958, Penland stated that it "forms loose mats up to one foot in diameter". Neither the author nor Beth Painter and Sandy Emrick have seen plants larger than 4 inches in diameter during their fieldwork.

A number of questions still need answers with regard to this species. They include: What is the total range? What are its habitat requirements? How many plants are there in each population? What pollinates the flowers and insures seed production? What influence does grazing by domestic and native animals have on growth and establishment. Contributions to these answers could be made by both layperson and professional.

--- J. Scott Peterson

"For want of a nail, the shoe was lost
for want of a shoe, the horse was lost
for want of a horse, the rider was lost
.....
FOR WANT OF ARTICLES, THIS NEWSLETTER
MAY BE LOST!
--- Editor

MINUTES, BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
OCTOBER 27, 1979

Following the semiannual meeting of the Society, the BOD convened at ca. 4:15 PM at the Denver Botanic Gardens. Retiring President Bill Harmon turned the meeting over to continuing BOD member Tom Eamon, who presided for the remainder of the meeting. Newly elected BOD members were introduced and included Ann Armstrong, Tom Eamon (re-elected), Bob Heapes, Sue Martin and Walt Ruzzo. Continuing members are: Miriam Denham, Virginia Dionigi, Scott Peterson, Mark Phillips and Hugo Ferchau. David Buckner was present to represent the Boulder Chapter.

Officers for 1979-1980 were elected and are:
President: Lloyd Hayes; Vice-President: Scott Peterson; Secretary: Sue Martin; Treasurer: Walt Ruzzo.

The annual meeting of the Society was a success, with attendance high at an excellent slide presentation of wildflowers from throughout Colorado.