

Colorado Native Plant Society

NEWSLETTER



Volume III Number 4

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

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Sue Martin, USDA Crops Research Lab, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins, CO 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 CACTI TO BE LISTED AS ENDANGERED

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has published a notice in the Federal Register, Volume 44, No. 128, p. 38611, July 2, 1979, announcing their intention to list as endangered, 17 taxa of rare cacti in the Southwest. Among these are: Sclerocactus mesa-verdae, which occurs in southwestern Colorado and northwestern New Mexico; Pediocactus knowltonii, which is known from just 1 population on the Colorado-New Mexico border; and Echinocereus triglochidiatus var. inermis, which occurs in west-central and southwestern Colorado. Critical habitat will not be listed for the cacti, since publication of their locations could result in increased exploitation which is the primary factor currently threatening their survival.

Sclerocactus mesa-verdae, Pediocactus knowltonii and Echinocereus triglochidiatus var. inermis will be the first Colorado plants to be listed as either endangered or threatened. Upon final listing, interstate sale of the species will be prohibited and Federal agencies will be prohibited, through their actions and/or decisions, from "jeopardizing the continued existence" of the species.

In addition, the CO-NPS has learned that the Fish and Wildlife Service is considering final listing of Sclerocactus glaucus, a rare cactus which occurs in westcentral Colorado and northeastern Utah. According to Rosemary Carey, Endangered Species Office in Washington D.C., the Fish and Wildlife Service will try to list this species by November, before it is dropped from the proposed endangered list, along with ca. 1600-1700 other proposed endangered plants which have not received final listing. S. glaucus will also be listed without accompanying critical habitat designation.

--- Jim Ratzloff

EDITOR'S NOTE: It is largely through the careful and painstaking efforts of Jim Ratzloff that these species were brought to the attention of the U.S. F. & W. Service.

The next NEWSLETTER will consist of the cover sheet and a return address sheet unless the editor receives articles for inclusion. Surely there are those among the membership who have much to contribute in terms of newsworthy articles or items of interest with regard to the Colorado flora!

WATCH FOR THIS NEW, POTENTIALLY AGGRESSIVE WEED.

Gypsophila scorzonerifolia Der. in DC. has been collected in the City of Boulder. It is a tall plant up to a meter or more high, with up to 25 stout, leafy stems from a stout taproot. The leaves are up to 2 cm wide, oblong, and somewhat clasping at the base. The leaves are glaucous. The small white or pink flowers are in very open cymes at the top of the shoots. This species differs from G. paniculata L., the often abundantly naturalized "Baby's Breath", in having glandular pedicels, narrow acute calyx lobes, broader leaves and seeds with rounded tubercles. G. scorzonerifolia is described in the Flora Europaea and the Flora USSR and is reported to be native in the region of the Lower Volga, the Caucasus and the Transcaucasus of the Soviet Union.

--- William A. Weber

STELLARIA JAMESIANA

Stellaria jamesiana Torrey is a common and conspicuous species in the forests of the Southern Rocky Mountains from the foothills through the subalpine. It has always been somewhat anomalous in the genus because of its shallowly notched petals, very large flow and long leaves. In fact, Shinners (1962) transferred it to Arenaria because of its notched petals. He was quite right that S. jamesiana was out of place in Stellaria, but he may not have been aware of the fact that other characters indicate that neither does it belong to Arenaria. Most collectors find this species very easy to collect, because it pulls up quite easily. However, this is because the base is brittle and separates easily from the perennial rhizome, which characteristically has fusiform tubers along it.

While the flowers are showy, it is apparent that good seed is rarely set, and while we do not know for sure, possibly the fruits are produced by cleistogamous flowers. This combination of characteristics in Stellaria jamesiana suggests an alliance with a predominantly Asiatic genus, Pseudostellaria, of which there are about a dozen species found from Japan to Central Asia (Altai and Afghanistan) and one species, P. europaea, reaches southeastern Europe as far as Yugoslavia, adjacent Italy and Austria. This instance adds yet another stone to the foundation of relationship between the Rocky Mountains and Central Asia, which Sir Joseph Hooker was so impressed with following his visit to Colorado in 1877. I am proposing the official transfer of our plant to Pseudostellaria in another journal shortly.

--- William A. Weber

STAMPS COMMEMORATE ENDANGERED FLORA

Remember the 4 Endangered plant species pictured on each of 4 separate stamps issued in June? Two of them represented species from the Antioch Dunes, which formerly covered 500 acres on the south bank of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River in Contra Costa County, California. They are the Contra Costa Wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum* var. *angustatum*) and the Antioch Dunes Evening-Primrose (*Oenothera deltoides* var. *howellii*). The following represents an update on the latter two species from Alice Howard, the legislative Coordinator of the CA-NPS.

"The Antioch Dunes have been mined for sand for decades until there is nothing left resembling a dune. In fact renewed sand mining was going on apace soon after the stamps appeared, though the FWS had been negotiating with the owner to acquire the property. Mining was temporarily halted by invoking both federal and state law pending receipt of a new appraisal for acquisition. This figure will be made public at any time. From past history it is very unlikely to be acceptable to the owner. In the meantime, he has given option on the property to a developer who wants to build condominiums and a marina there. One wonders about the suitability of such a proposal in an area zoned for heavy industry with a gypsum board plant and a sewage plant for immediate neighbors!

Unless FWS is ready and willing to proceed immediately with emergency condemnation, should it be necessary when the new offer is set before the owner, the situation will be lost and the stamps will have served only to commemorate the passing of a viable ecosystem."

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES PROGRAM IS ENDANGERED!

Sometime during the last weeks of September (even by now) or early October, Congress will pass reauthorization legislation that primarily extends funding for activities under the Endangered Species Act. Further amendments are possible during this process. A number of these are such that the Fish & Wildlife Service believes that it can no longer accept additional workloads imposed by the potential amendments and that the best course of action would be to jettison as quickly as possible those species merely proposed for listing. Other amendments require final rulemakings by November 10, 1979 and the need for consideration of economic impact associated with designating critical habitat. At the time of writing this item (September 27) the editor contacted Jim Johnson's office in Washington D.C. (U.S. House, northern Colorado). Apparently a compromise involving the President and the congressional committee

overseeing the reauthorization bill has been worked out. The President agreed to sign legislation authorizing completion of Tellico Dam (again jeopardizing the Snail Darter) in exchange for no amendments to the Endangered Species Act reauthorization bill.

These events strongly suggest that the Endangered Species program may well have provided some good in terms of some species preservation, but that solid, well-supported, complete programs for all endangered and threatened species are seriously in jeopardy. If current trends among the public and in the Congress continue, there will be many more losses than gains.

--- Editor

ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 27

The annual election of the Board of Directors will occur at the October 27 Meeting. The members retiring at this meeting are Libby Goodwin, Bill Harmon, Karen Hollweg and Jim Ratzloff. The members continuing in service through 1980 are Miriam Denham, Virginia Dionisi, Hugo Ferchau, Scott Peterson and Mark Phillips. 5 new members must be elected to serve 2 years. Bill Harmon has appointed a nominations committee to develop a list of nominees for this election. If you are interested in serving or know of some interested, please notify Scott Peterson at 303-491-6824, or in care of Botany & Plant Pathology Dept., CSU, Ft. Collins, 80523.

REMEMBER! The CO NPS annual meeting, scheduled for Saturday, October 27, 1979 at the Denver Botanical Gardens, 909 South York Street, Denver.

Use the enclosed full page flyer as your personal advertisement for this meeting by posting it conspicuously for friends or potentially interested parties can see it.
