

Manzanita

Newsletter of the Kane County Chapter
of the Utah Native Plant Society

April 2007 News



April Meeting: Monday, 2 April – An unusual Fishhook cactus population in Grand Staircase- Observations over 45 years – Dorde Woodruff, protégé of cactus expert Lyman Benson, has been studying cacti across Utah and the western US for 5 decades. In 1962, she documented a unique population of Small-flower fishhook cactus (*Sclerocactus parviflorus*) with white or pale pink flowers along a 6 km stretch of the Cottonwood Road in what is today the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. (Normally, this species has dark pink flowers, as shown in the photo, above.) Over the years, Dorde returned periodically and noted the population persisting along the road in badly overgrazed flats. As recently as 2002, the population appeared numerous. More recently, the colony has started to decline. Numerous factors may be at work, including cheatgrass invasion, drought, and insect predation. Dorde will describe her long-term research and offer some thoughts on remedies for arresting the decline of this population.

As always, our meeting will be held in the public meeting room of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (on US Hwy 89 east of downtown Kanab, between Walker's truck stop and the Holiday Inn) at 7 PM and will be followed by a dessert social and general revelry. Dorde will also be available to answer your questions about cacti.

Spring Native Plant Sale: Merrill Johnson of Great Basin Natives (Holden, UT) and Janett Warner of Wildland Nursery (Joseph, UT) will return on Saturday, April 28 to offer a selection of native wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees for sale. The event will occur on the grounds of the Kane County tourism board (site of the Farmer's Market during the summer) from 9-12 AM. Come early and come often for the best selection.

May Wildflower Hike: On Tuesday, May 1, we will have our first outdoor field trip of the 2007 season, kicking things off with an evening wildflower stroll along the Bunting Trail in the Kanab Ranchos. Taxonomically-astute botanists will be along to point out the spring wildflowers in bloom along this mostly gently, sandy trail (we won't have time to go to the top of the mesa). Plan to meet at the parking area at the trailhead at 6:30 PM. For those who don't know how to get there, we will have a caravan leaving the Grand Staircase visitor center promptly at 6:20 PM.

March Meeting Recap: Carolyn Shelton entertained an intimate gathering of plant lovers on March 12 with a presentation on techniques for creating a personalized, naturalist notebook. Participants received instruction in drawing natural artifacts, tips on various artistic media, and pointers on how to better observe things around them.

This edition of Manzanita was written by Walter Fertig and Carolyn Shelton. Reader submissions are always welcome. For more information on upcoming events, contact Walt Fertig at 689-0224 or walt@kanab.net. Chapter events and an archive of past Manzanita newsletters are also posted on the Utah Native Plant Society website at www.unps.org