



VOLUME 25, ISSUE 6

NOV/DEC 2002

Special Sego Lily Internet Offer for all Members!

You can save a tree, reduce waste, and give more money to UNPS programs at no extra cost to you! Too good to be true? Not at all! Simply elect to receive the Sego Lily in electronic format only. This saves us printing and mailing costs, and every penny saved is a penny we can devote to the core programs of UNPS—to education and research promoting the conservation of native plants.

For example, our grant-in-aid program has recently



awarded grants to support surveys of

threatened native plants in the Capitol Reef National Park area, tamarisk removal in Dinosaur National Monument, research on what makes yellow starthistle such a threatening invasive weed, and more. Additionally, we have contributed to weed eradication programs, local restoration efforts, and publication costs of educational brochures. But all of this takes money and our resources are stretched thin. We don't want to raise dues again, so help us the cost-free way. Visit the web site to sign up today for electronic only delivery! Newsletters will be archived electronically so you will always have access to them, or print them out yourself.



NOV/DEC 2002

Special Sego Lily Internet Offer for all Members

Letter Calling for Equal Protection of Plants

UNPS Annual Members Meeting

Summary of Great Basin Nation Park Field Trip

Events and Chapter News

Letter Calling for Equal Protection of Plants

The Utah Native Plant Society is signatory to the following "open" letter which is a part of the Equal Protection for Plants Campaign initiated by the California Native Plant Society. This letter has been included as in the appendix of a 2002 publication referenced below.

Open Letter calling for Equal Protection for Plants under the Federal Endangered Species Act, June 24, 1999

Plants and animals contribute equally to the stability, health, and functions of the ecosystems on which we all depend for survival. However, plants and animals are not treated equally under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Federally listed plant species are among the rarest and most imperiled species in our nation. But although the Federal Endangered Species Act prohibits the unauthorized destruction or even harm of Federally listed animals everywhere they occur, it allows many listed plants to be killed, without limit, on non-Federal lands, except in restricted circumstances.* In fact, some plant species can be knowingly driven to extinction without violating the Federal Act.

Lesser protection for plants is unsupportable biologically. It disregards our current understanding that plants and animals are inextricably intertwined in the structure and functioning of healthy ecosystems.

Unless plant species are protected from extinction as vigorously as animals, efforts to conserve biological diversity will inevitably fail. Plants and animals depend upon each other for food, habitat, indeed for their very survival. We cannot arbitrarily pick only one kingdom to protect. Ecosystems cannot survive with only one group or the other.

For these reasons, the undersigned organizations urge that the Federal Endangered Species Act be amended to provide the same protection for plants that it currently provides for animals through all of its policies, programs, and penalties.

Signed (as of June 20, 2002),

1. National Parks and Conservation Association, Washington DC
2. Natural Resources Defense Council, Washington, DC
3. American Lands Alliance, Washington DC
4. Endangered Habitats League, San Diego, CA
5. Endangered Species Coalition, Washington DC
6. Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign, Sacramento, CA
7. Pacific Rivers Council, Portland, Or
8. California Botanical Society, Sacramento, CA
9. Oregon Natural Resources Council Action, Eugene, OR
10. Sequoia Forest Alliance, Weldon, CA
11. Safe Alternatives for our Forest Environment, Hayfork, CA
12. Cold Mountain, Cold Rivers, Missoula MT
13. Forest Issues Group, Grass Valley, CA
14. Center for Sierra Nevada Conservation, Georgetown, CA
15. Whidbey Environmental Action Network, Seattle, WA
16. Oregon Natural Desert Association, Portland, OR
17. Grassroots Environmental Effectiveness Network, Washington DC
18. Center for Biological Diversity, Tuscon, AZ
19. Society for Conservation Biology
20. Student Environmental Action Coalition, Normal IL
21. Defenders of Wildlife, Washington DC
22. John Wesley Powell Audubon Society, Normal IL
23. US PIRG, Washington DC
24. Florida Native Plant Society
25. Native Plant Society of Oregon

26. Texas Committee on Natural Resources (TCOHR)
27. Washington Native Plant Society
28. Southern California Botanists
29. Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society
30. The Wilderness Society, Washington DC
31. The Sierra Club, Washington DC
32. Friends of Georgia, Inc., Stone Mountain, GA
33. North Carolina Wild Flower Preservation Society
34. Botanical Society of America
35. Society for Conservation Biology, Missouri Chapter
36. T&E Inc., Cortaro, Arizona
37. Utah Native Plant Society

*Section 9 (a) (1) of the ESA (16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.) gives animals full protection from destruction “within the United States or the territorial sea of the United States” or “upon the high seas.” But Section 9 (a) (2) (B) of the ESA prohibits destruction of Federally listed plant species only on “areas under Federal jurisdiction.” Plants also cannot be killed in knowing violation of state law, while trespassing, or in violation of Section 7 of the ESA which governs Federal agency actions.

Therefore, listed plants are only protected (1) on Federal lands or during activities that are funded, permitted, or carried out by a Federal agency and are therefore under Federal jurisdiction, or (2) in the unlikely event that it can be proved that they are destroyed in knowing violation of state law or during trespassing. Logging, housing development, mining, and other activities may all kill unlimited numbers of Federally listed plants, even cause extinction of a species, as long as the destruction does not meet these conditions.

The foregoing was excerpted from an appendix in the following publication: Roberson, E.B. 2002. Barriers to Native Plant Conservation in the United States: funding, staffing, law. Native Plant Conservation Campaign, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, CA and Center for Biological Diversity, Tucson, AZ

For more information contact the Native Plant Conservation Campaign c/o California Native Plant Society, 1722 J. St., Suite 17, Sacramento CA 95814. Emily B. Roberson, Ph.D., Project Director. Phone: 415.970.0394. Fax: 916.447.2727. EMILYR@cnp.org. Web: www.cnp.org, www.biologicaldiversity.org

UNPS ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING!

New World Pot Luck Dinner & Election of Directors

Bill King will present “Stalking the Wild
Penstemon of Southern Utah”

Friday November 22, 2002, 6:30 pm

Sugarhouse Garden Center, 1602 E 2100 S
Salt Lake City

For more info call Bill 801-582-0432



Summary of Great Basin National Park Field Trip

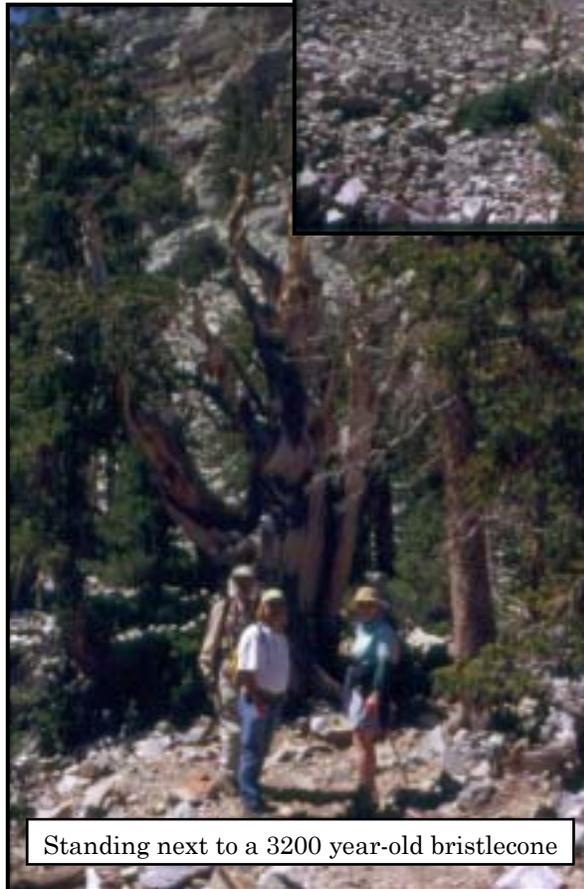
August 10-11, 2002

David Wallace, Cache UNPS

Forest, Salt Lake; Dick Van Reyper, Park City; Kees Jan van Zwiener, Alblasterdam, Netherlands; Dave Wallace, Logan; and Bill and Cathy King, Salt Lake City.

I couldn't resist the chance for a field-trip to Great Basin National Park. It's been too long since I visited this wonderful place, and it was my last opportunity for an outing before school started. Things turned out even better than expected, with good weather, great company, and an outstanding natural experience.

Bill King, UNPS Conservation Committee Chairman, organized the event as a joint activity with the Wasatch Rock Garden Society. Bill emailed a meticulous set of instructions, with travel and accommodation information and details about the planned activities. The trip was bound to be a success with such careful planning! Thirteen people participated: Bea Mayes, Park City; Bob and Judy Johnson, Kaysville; Jeff Brimley, Bountiful; Thel and Wendy Noyes, Layton; Richard Jonas, Salt Lake City; Nancy



It's a long drive from Logan, and it was late Friday night when I finally arrived at the 10,000 ft. elevation Wheeler Peak Campground. There were no available campsites, but fortunately Bill and Cathy left enough room to park behind their car. Most of the participants camped here, a good way to avoid the valley heat and to get a head start on high-elevation acclimatization.

The next morning everyone met for a hike to the famous bristlecone pine forest. Interpretive signs along the trail explained how researchers use an incremental borer to determine the age of the trees, and the age was provided for several individual trees. Most of

the group continued up the trail to the rock glacier at the base of Wheeler Peak.

This area is famous as the location of the oldest living tree, a 5000 year-old bristlecone pine known as Prometheus. In 1964, a researcher cut the tree down and sliced it into pieces to get an accurate count of the rings.

The U.S. Park Service doesn't advertise the location, but the 1965 journal article shows where it is¹.

It was a rough scramble over the boulders, but we found Prometheus without too much trouble. The stump and other pieces looked much the same as when I last saw them in 1989, but there was evidence of some recent (but minor) souvenir collecting. It's depressing to see these pathetic remains, when we could have been admiring the oldest living tree on earth instead.

After the hike, we all met back at the campground for a potluck dinner. The next morning, several of us hiked to the nearby lakes. There was evidence of a spectacular display of Parry's Primrose along the creek, but it was too late in the season (maybe we'll

come back in July next time?). We also stopped at the visitors' center before leaving the Park. In past years, a slab from Prometheus was mounted anonymously and inconspicuously a wall. It was a pleasant surprise to see it prominently displayed as the showpiece of the center's main exhibit.

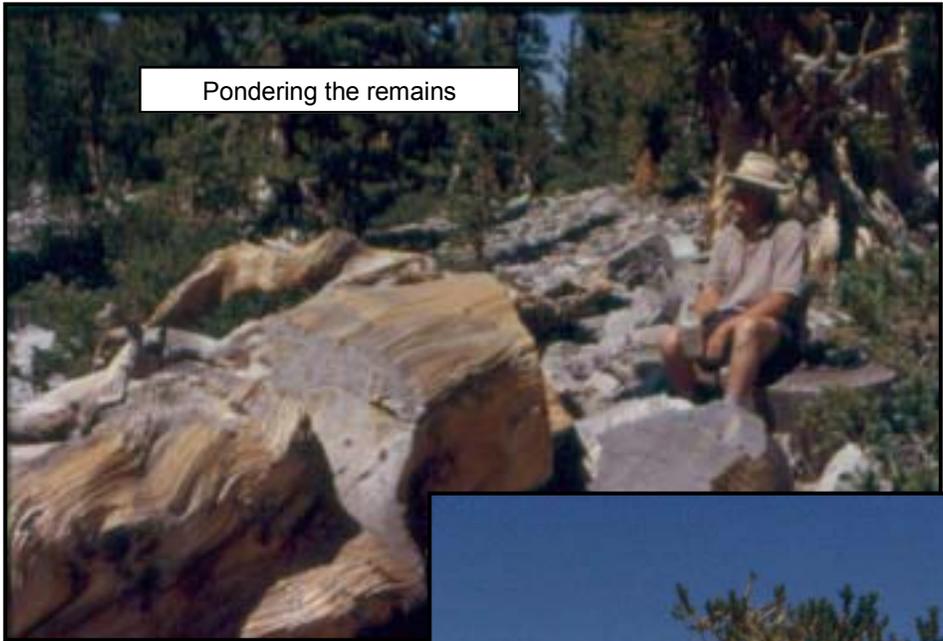


When the 5000 year-old tree was cut down in 1964, bristlecone pines were known as *Pinus aristata*. In 1970, D.K. Bailey named the "Great Basin" bristlecone pine *Pinus longaeva*, to distinguish it from the "Rocky Mountain" bristlecone pine, still known as *P. aristata*². *P. longaeva* is geographically separate, and it has significant morphological differences. The most obvious difference is the needles. *P. aristata* usually has white exudations of resin on the needles, yet the needles of *P. longaeva*

are shiny and green. You can usually see this "dandruff" on the needles of the *P. aristata* bristlecone pines found in the nursery trade.

Scientists named the 5000 year-old tree "Prometheus" several years before it was cut down, and we now know it was 2000 years older than any other tree in the area. In 1964, an incremental borer was used to

help find the oldest tree at Wheeler Peak. When the researcher encountered difficulty accurately establishing its age, he successfully petitioned the Forest Service to cut down the tree he called "WPN-114". He greatly understates the significance of this action in his 1965 journal article: "To facilitate compilation of a long-term tree-ring chronology for the Wheeler Peak area, one of the larger living bristlecone pines was sectioned."



Pondering the remains

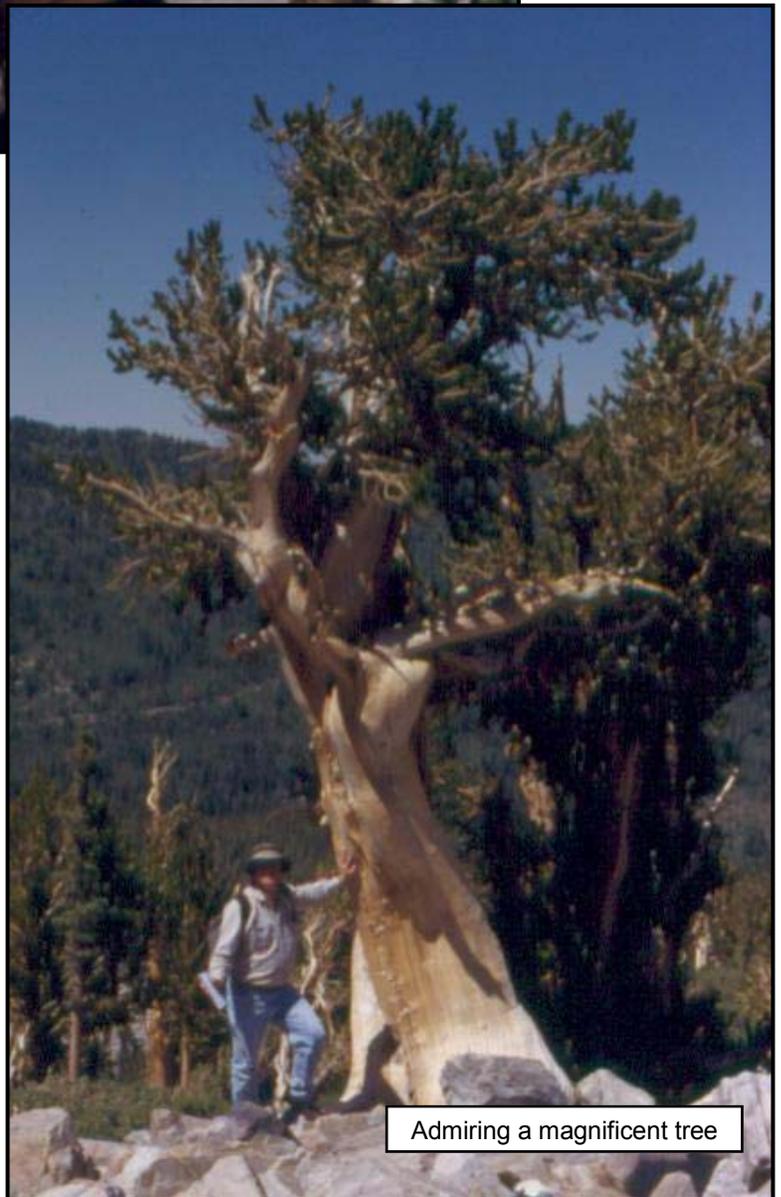
1. Bailey, D.K. "Phytogeography and Taxonomy of *Pinus* Subsection *Balfourianae*." *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 57 (1970) 210-49

Cohen, Michael P. *A Garden of Bristlecones: Tales of Change in the Great Basin*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1998

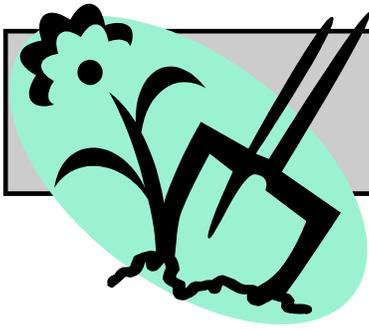
I've often condemned the perpetrator of this unfortunate deed, but there are other cases where researchers have "collected" unique specimens in the name of science. Michael P. Cohen in *A Garden of Bristlecones* claims a benefit resulted from the felling of Prometheus. Cohen says the scientific discoveries were "less powerful as arguments for reserving bristlecone groves than the controversy surrounding the cutting of WPN-114" because that event was used by writers to attack the Forest Service and to plead for preservation. In other words, the cutting of Prometheus helped to preserve the bristlecone pines and to establish Great Basin National Park.

References:

Currey, Donald R. "An Ancient Bristlecone Pine Stand in Eastern Nevada" *Ecology*, 46 (1965): 564-66



Admiring a magnificent tree



Events and Chapter News

“Inspired by Nature” talk at Red Butte Gardens

Marcia Tatroe will give a talk on Friday, November 1, 2002 at Red Butte Gardens at 7 PM. Her lecture is entitled "Inspired by Nature - Gardens that reflect the Intermountain Beauty" Marcia is a horticulturist, designer and author from Denver Colorado. \$5 for UNPS members \$7 for nonmembers.

For a complete list of seminar titles and abstracts, please see the website

(www.usu.edu/ecology/eco-cntr.htm)

November 20-21, 2002: Jayne Belnap, U.S. Geological Survey, Moab, Utah.

December 4-5, 2002: Steve Polasky, Department of Ecological/Environmental Economics, University of Michigan

January 15-16, 2003: Nancy Grimm, Department of Biology, Arizona State University

USU

Ecology Center Seminars

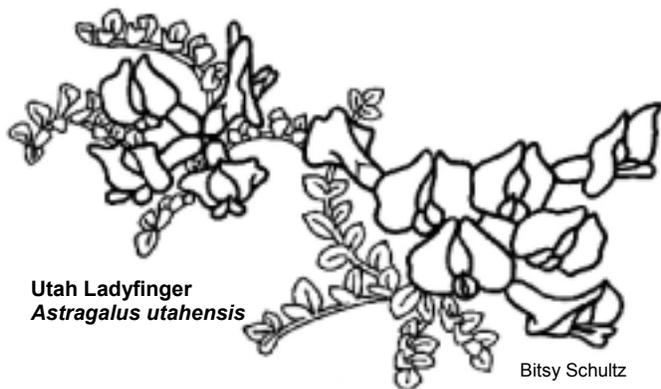
All seminars will be held in the Natural Resources Building Room 105, Utah State University. Each speaker will give two seminars: Wednesday: 6-7PM, Thursday: 3-4PM.



Bristlecone pine and prairie on top of LDS conference center

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Utah Native Plant Society Membership and Information

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For more information about the Utah Native Plant Society call:

Bill King: 582-0432
 Susan Garvin: 356-5108
 Larry Meyer: 272-3275
 Or write to: unps@unps.org

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Please send a complimentary copy of the Segó Lily to the above individual.

Check out our website!
www.unps.org

Many thanks to Xmission for sponsoring the Utah Native Plant Society website.

Please direct all suggestions, articles and events for the newsletter to Paula Mohadjer at paulam@jvwcd.org. **The deadline for next issue is December 13.**

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS
 Cache: Tami Coleman
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 Central Utah Chapter
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 Price: Mike Hubbard
 Salt Lake: Mindy Wheeler
 Southern Utah: Mike Empey
 Utah Valley: Phil Allen

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