

Sego Lily

Newsletter of the Utah Native Plant Society

VOLUME 29 , ISSUE 3

May/June 2006

UNPS Forms Native Cactus Interest Group

Words and photos By Dorde W. Woodruff



The first flowers were just opening on these clumps of prickly pears on July 9, 2005.

All UNPS members are invited to join this new Yahoo email discussion group, devoted to everything and anything on the subject of Utah cacti.

Collectors' passion for Cactaceae waxes and wanes a bit with fashion, but is always there. Especially overseas in places like Germany and Japan, collectors are avid. All the pressure to provide cacti for the trade, even though extensive growing from seed is done these days, makes conservation important. Some taxa are known from only a few locations, and may be sparse even where they are found. Utah is especially rich in Threatened and Endangered cactus species.

Although we're careful with locations for any species that are rare at all, still we must limit participation in this group to currently active UNPS members, checking those that apply against the membership list.

We ask that after acceptance new members post a short background, telling us about their interest in cacti. With the above caveat, all are welcome, botanists and non-botanists, lookers and growers, beginners and experts.

In addition to the email discussion group, we're planning field trips, the first ones during one day to locations in or near the Wasatch Front.

To join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UNPSNativeCacti/>



May/June 2006

<i>UNPS Forms Native Cactus Interest Group : P1</i>	<i>Lifetime Update & Pediocactus Simpsonii : P2</i>
<i>Prop Shop Update : P3</i>	<i>A Weed Wary Word to Gardeners : P4</i>
<i>Botany 101 - Scrophulariaceae : P5</i>	<i>Calendar of Events : P6</i>
<i>Warning to Native Plants in Foothills! : P8</i>	

Lifetime Member Update

By Tony Frates

UNPS would like to say thank you to Elaine York of The Nature Conservancy who became our latest lifetime member in March.

Thanks for your support Elaine!

Pediocactus simpsonii

Words & Photo by Jeff Mitchell

Pediocactus simpsonii is one of Utah's highest elevation cacti. It goes as high as 11,000 feet. In Utah it has been found as low as 5500 feet in the rolling hills of Dog Valley west of Nephi and in the hills east of Joseph. I've usually found them above 6500 feet.

This is another of the pincushion cactus species. We could also call it Simpson's footcactus. But I'm told that is not helpful either because the name footcactus was a misnomer. The prefix *pedio* comes from the Greek *pedion* which means plains or open country. The footcactus was an attribution to the latin *pedis* which meant foot. Somebody apparently took a look at the 'ped' in *Pediocactus* and said 'foot' which is an understandable mistake. Just another reason we have to be careful with common names.



Pediocactus simpsonii in bloom

P. simpsonii has two varieties in Utah: *minor* and *simpsonii*. The flowers may be pink or yellow and are the first

of the cacti each year. They've been spotted in bloom with their little crown of flowers poking out of the snow. I have under cultivation specimens from the Mineral Mountains in Beaver County, Dog Valley in Juab County, East Tintic Mountains in Utah county (all yellow flowers) and from Highway 72 in Sevier County (pink flowers). The flowers are prolific with around 10 to 20 blooms per stem.

Seeds are in small dehiscent (they break open when ripe) pods which are well protected by the heavy spination. Collecting the seeds requires a different method than pulling the pod off which can be done with most of the other *Pediocactus*. One knocks the seeds out of the pods by poking between the spines with tweezers and they fall to the ground where one can either pick them up with the tweezers or fill up the pot with water and float them out. Some people collect them with vacuum cleaners. When I first started out with cacti, I was told that I should practice growing *Pediocactus* seeds using this species before I tried the 'harder' species. It turns out that most of the *Pediocacti* are fairly easy to grow from seed and only *P. bradyi* turns out to be difficult.

Unlike *Pediocacti despainii*, *winkleri*, *bradyi*, *paradinei* and *knowltonii*, *P. simpsonii* has stiff hard centrals which are brown to whitish (mostly brown). The Garfield County specimens have the white centrals, and those in the Sevier valley near Joseph do too. But the ones from Beaver County, Sevier County north of Loa, Mineral Mountains, Juab and Utah Counties all have the brown centrals. The specimens from the East Tintic Mountains are the most globular and are the largest--around the size of a cantaloupe, all the others are smaller and flatter.

P. simpsonii is a common cactus and there are no environment concerns related to them that I am aware of. They tend to be in mountainous areas unlikely to be developed, mined or drilled. If you try to drive over them with an ORV you will likely find yourself in the hospital because the terrain is really too rough to do that in. These plants have denser populations than *Opuntias* (prickly pear/chollas) in a number areas, and I've even found them with flashlight at night.

They are very cold hardy of course, and make a good addition to pretty much any xeric landscape or rock garden. These can be bought from Mesa Garden in New Mexico and you can see the selection available at mesagarden.com. You can find seeds for almost every species of cactus known to man at this place as well. If you want to experiment with growing cactus, its hard to go wrong with *P. simpsonii*.

Prop Shop Round-Up

Our propagation workshops had a great turnout this year! Over 70 people attended the various workshops in Salt Lake County, a big thank you to Maggie Wolf who has put a tremendous amount of work into making these prop shops happen. We had good feedback from the prop shops in Cache with over 40 attendees and Southern Utah who despite heavy snow had an interesting workshop led by Rick Heflebower with seed provided by Zion National Park. Utah County held its prop shop in Provo and had 8 participants, the workshop was led by Julia Tuck.

Both Cache and Southern Utah Chapters have concluded that in order to be able to guarantee a variety of seeds for next year's prop shops, they will have to do some field collection themselves. Both chapters have decided to organize member field trips specifically to collect a good supply of seed for next year.

A Weed-Wary Word to Gardeners

Reproduced with permission of Wyoming Native Plant Society please note original article is 2002 but information is still relevant.

The seed packets may have labels with romantic-sounding names such as meadow mixture and wedding wildflowers, while others tout backyard biodiversity and make reference to Earth Day. When growing nineteen such packets of wildflower mixes, however, University of Washington researchers found that each contained from three to thirteen invasive species and eight had seeds for plants considered *noxious weeds* in at least one U.S. state or Canadian province.

And what makes it nearly impossible for gardeners who want to be conscientious is that a third of the packets listed no contents and a little more than another third had inaccurate lists. Only five of the nineteen correctly itemized everything.

“I can’t recommend using any wildflower seed mixes,” says Lorraine Brooks, who did the work at the UW’s Center for Urban Horticulture while earning her bachelor’s degree.

The seed mixes in this experiment were produced at or distributed from a variety of U.S and Canadian locations. Brooks and Sarah Reichard, UW assistant professor of forest resources, say gardeners are better off using their favorite plants, or seeds for their favorites, to control what’s grown in their yards.

Gardeners might be surprised at the flowers and seeds on the market that are considered invasive or noxious. Yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) is listed as a noxious weed in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and eleven other states and provinces [including Wasatch County]. With yellow flowers tinged with orange that resemble snapdragon blossoms, toadflax was found in four of the wildflower mixes. ***One listed it.***

Even labels that refer to wildflowers as native should be avoided because everything is native to someplace, but that place may not be where you live, Reichard says.

In closing, here are a couple of the key questions to be considered by consumers:

- Should a consumer buy wildflower seed mixes that don’t list their contents?
- How can consumers know that wildflower seed mixtures shouldn’t be spread near or in natural woodlands, meadows or fields when they are labeled with words such as “native,” “biodiversity” and the term “wildflower” itself?
- Should any consideration be given before species that have proved invasive in one part of the country are included in mixes sold in other parts of the country?

For more information, check the following websites.

Nature Conservancy's Wildland Invasive Species Team explains what happens when invasives get into wildlands at: <http://tncweeds.ucdavis.edu/common.html>

For some listed invasive species go to the "Invasive & Noxious" section of:

http://plants.usda.gov/cgi_bin/topics.cgi?earl+noxious.cgi

Find state noxious weed sites and lists at :

<http://www.ars-grin.gov/npgs/tax/taxweed.html>

The original article can be found at:

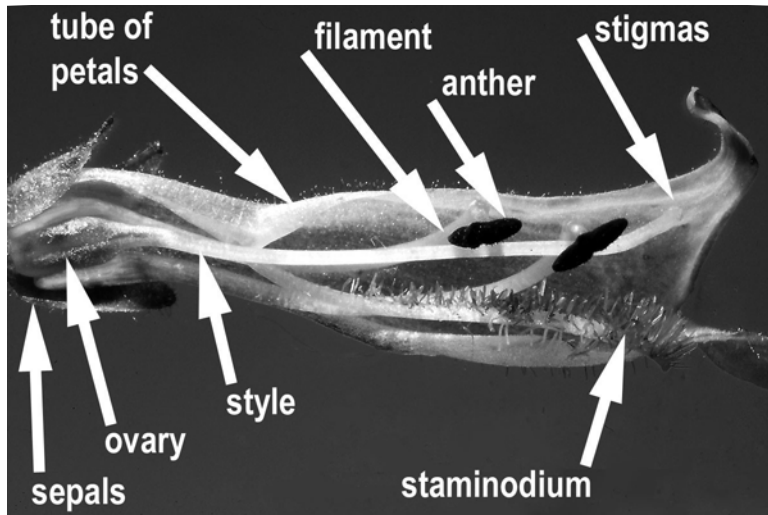
<http://www.washington.edu/newsroom/news/2002archive/04-02archive/k041802a.html>

Botany 101 - Scrophulariaceae

By Rebecca Dolan, Ph.D, Friesner Herbarium, Butler University
 Photo courtesy of Kenneth R Robertson, Illinois Natural History Survey

Scrophulariaceae=Snapdragon Family=Foxglove Family.

The snapdragon and foxglove family comprises about 220 genera and 3000 species worldwide. Indiana has about 24 genera and 59 species.



Characteristics

Mostly annual and perennial herbs, although there are some woody members, such as Princess tree.

Flowers irregular with parts in 5s (sepals and petals sometimes fused and 4-lobed), usually showy. Corolla two-lipped. Stamens 4, sometimes with a 5th staminoid (modified stamen, such as the hairy, sterile staminoid that is the bearded tongue of beard-tongues).

Stem can be square, easily confused with mints, although leaves are usually alternative. Fruit a capsule.

Economic Importance

Some garden ornamentals, including snapdragon, turtlehead, beard-tongue and foxglove. Heart drug digitalis is from foxglove. Some are semi-parasitic on the roots of other plants.

Scrophs to look for in Utah

Native

Beard-tongues, *Penstemon* spp.

Blue-eyed Mary, *Collinsia parviflora*

Indian paintbrush, *Castilleja angustifolia*

Non-native

Butter-and-eggs, (aka yellow toadflax) *Linaria vulgaris*

Dalmation Toadflax, *Linaria dalmatica* – both species are invasives but are listed as noxious weeds only in Wasatch County <http://www.utahweed.org/weeds.htm>

For more general information on Scrophulariaceae

<http://montana.plant-life.org/families/Scrophulariaceae.htm>

<http://www.csd.tamu.edu/FLORA/301Manhart/Dicots/Asteridae/Scr/Scr.html>

<http://www.csd.tamu.edu/FLORA/Wilson/ftp/ast/scrpage2.htm>

Reprinted from INPAWS Journal, Vol.12, No. 4, with permission from the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society.

Calendar of Events

Please note that some of the events listed *may have already taken place*. For the most up-to-date events lists go to our website www.unps.org and click on the “calendar” link.

April

- April 20th : Manzanita Chapter Meeting (postponed from April 1). Guest speaker will be Peter Lesica, a famous botanist / ecologist from Missoula Montana, will be giving a program on the flora and ecology of Glacier National Park, where he has conducted research on the native flora and rare plants for several decades. Peter is also working on a photographic guide to the wildflowers of Southern Utah.
- April 21st : Cache Chapter Earth Day Celebration 9am to 3pm USU Campus, Taggart Student Center Courtyard - Volunteers and Visitors needed. Contact Steve Ripple steveripple@comcast.net or call 435-752 2732
- April 22nd : The UNPS board will be meeting at the new Escalante visitor center at 1 pm. At 10 am there will be a field trip in Escalante to see the town’s Main Street landscaping with native plants. We will be camping in the Escalante State Park campground on Friday night, with potluck dinner at 6 pm. See http://www.stateparks.utah.gov/park_pages/parkpage.php?id=esp. Interested members may attend potluck, fieldtrip and meeting. Walt Fertig will lead us to a campsite on Saturday night for those who wish to stay.
- Late April - Early May: Cache Chapter has plans to visit populations of *Primula cusickiana* var *maguirei* in Logan Canyon. Participants will help to fill out a monitoring report for the Forest Service Recovery Plan, trip is dependant on weather and schedules. Interested? Contact Steve Ripple as above.
- For recent and upcoming Utah Valley events please go to <http://www.unps.org/> and click on the “chapters” “Utah Valley” links

May

- May 5th-6th : Utah Valley Chapter invites members on a field trip to the Book Cliffs. If you would like to participate please notify Robert Fitts by phone, 801-796-8631 or e-mail fitts_r_d@yahoo.com (underscores after fitts and r) and we will inform you of the details.
- May 11th : 7pm at Monument Visitors’ Center. Escalante Chapter will hold its next regular meeting. The speaker will be BLM botanist Amber Hughes who will address everyone’s favourite topic, “Weeds, Noxious and Invasive Species and Their Impacts On Our Landscape ”
- May 13th : Salt Lake Chapter is planning a trip to Beaver Dam Mountains to be led by Kipp Lee. The Beaver Dam area, in extreme South Western Utah is where the Mojave Desert just makes it into the state. Plants and birds found here occur nowhere else in Utah. Contact Bill Gray, 801-532-3486; cyberflora@xmission.com or Kipp Lee, 801-759-6204; kipp_lee@comcast.net for all field trip information pertaining to the Salt Lake Chapter or check the chapter page on www.unps.org
- May 17th : Utah Valley Chapter is planning a field trip, led by Paul Ames, to see the biggest pinon pine tree. Meet in Provo at the Uinta Forest Office on 88 W 100 N at 6 pm and carpool to meet Paul at the High School parking lot, in Eureka, the east side of town. Wear good hiking boots and long pants and bring plenty of water. The hike is *not* on an established trail. Hopefully, we’ll be lucky enough to see a display of *Lupinus polyphilus* on the same trip. Please let Robert Fitts know if you are planning to join us.

- May 18th : 7 pm Green Canyon Parking Lot - 1900 North East to parking lot. Cache Chapter Spring Wildflower Hike. Local botanists will lead hike to explore foothills and point out wildflowers. Contact Steve Ripple for more information.
- May 19th : Federal building at 88 W 100 N in Provo, Utah County Chapter will have a potluck and lecture, speaker tba. The potluck will begin at 6 pm with the lecture at 7pm.
- Mid May : The Cottonwood Canyons Foundation need your help pulling invasive weeds in Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons. They are looking for groups, schools, organizations and individuals to assist them.

The Foundation are looking for groups of 15-30 people from Mid-May to August. Training, tools and supervision will be provided by Cottonwood Canyons staff, interns and volunteers. These weed pulls are easy, educational and fun.

Call Patrick Nelson at (801) 947-8263 or e-mail him at pn@cottonwoodcanyons.org and schedule your weed pull this summer.

June

- June 6th-8th : The Wildland Shrub Symposium - Shrublands Under Fire : Disturbance and Recovery in a Changing World to be held in Cedar City, Utah. Go to <http://www.suu.edu/scps/confer/wildland/> for more information and to register.
- June 8th : before its summer hiatus, the Escalante Chapter will meet for a potluck BBQ and meeting featuring a "grab bag" of plant and gardening questions and the presentation of a second annual "Silver Trowel Award" For more information, contact Kathy Munthe at jandkcool@yahoo.com
- June 10th : Salt Lake & Utah Valley Chapters are planning a trip to Painters Spring in the West Desert to be led by Maggie Wolf. This trip will find quite a few plants that do not occur locally. Contact Bill or Kipp -details as before.
- June 15th : The Subtleties of Sagebrush taught by Dr Leila Shultz to be held at the Jackson Campus, cost \$70. Western Wyoming offers one of the highest diversities of sagebrush subspecies in all of North America: taxa critical in defining wildlife habitat. Join a specialist in sagebrush classification for a day in the field. Examine how the various types of sagebrush define ecological site conditions, including soil texture and precipitation, and consider the evolutionary forces that have led to species diversification.
- June 20th - 23rd : Field Botany : Flora of the Tetons taught by Dr Leila Shultz to be held at the Kelly Campus, cost \$290 (includes tuition and credit) plus \$30 registration fee. More than one thousand species, or approximately 5% of the flora of temperate North America, can be found within a few miles of the Teton Science Schools' Kelly Campus. Sharp ecological gradients on the Teton slopes and surrounding ranges provide an ideal setting for observing this bounty. Learn about common plant families and develop enough technical language to use scientific guides. Includes study of floral structure and major evolutionary groups of plants. (Undergraduate and graduate credit available through Utah State University - pass/fail, 2 semester hours)

For more information about Teton Science Schools' Summer Sojourns, contact Kathy Haskin at kathy.haskin@tetonscience.org or call 307 733-1313

Submitted by Mindy Wheeler and Bill Gray:

Our Hometurf Security surveillance received this alert from one of our underground operatives. We expect her to come out into the open some time in May or June.

Warning to native plants in foothills!!

To all native plants of the Central Wasatch Front: a message from your fearless leader – **Sego Lily**.

As part of your Neighborhood Watch duties, it is your responsibility to recognize the following invader, as it threatens our very existence! This fellow's real name is *Euphorbia myrsinites*, but he also goes by **Myrtle Spurge** or **Donkey-tail Spurge**. Distinguishing marks are fleshy blue-green leaves and yellow flower clusters. He has a habit of creeping from yard to yard, under oak, and all over slopes. Approach cautiously, as he has a *very* nasty sap that irritates people's skin and can cause blisters or an allergic reaction. Help may be coming from our friends at Utah Native Plant Society.



Beautiful, but Badly Behaved

Our mission at UNPS is to foster appreciation of our native plants. It's a many-pronged effort: research and education about them in their own right, encouraging their responsible use in horticulture (e.g. through the Utah's Choice program), and protecting their habitats.

Recent years have seen an explosive increase of several seriously invasive weeds along the Wasatch Front,

and doubtless in other areas too. We are looking for ways to help fight them, which will include working with other groups such as governmental agencies and sometimes plant nurseries. For some of these weeds are quite beautiful, and were originally introduced as ornamental plants. Most ornamentals are well-behaved, grow where you want them to, and don't go rampaging over the countryside. However, a very few find local conditions ideal and take off without restraint.

Myrtle Spurge (*Euphorbia myrsinites*, aka Donkey-tail Spurge) is one of those. It is a popular rock garden plant with misty-blue spirally arranged leaves and intricate yellow flowers. Like many spurges it has a toxic milky sap which causes skin irritation (sometimes severe), or nausea if ingested. Its preference for sloping well-drained soils makes our local foothills ideal. The long spell of dry years saw it increase its range dramatically along the benches and foothills in at least the Ogden area and the Salt Lake and Utah Valleys.

Because of this behavior we feel the use of Myrtle Spurge should be strongly discouraged, and we urge nurseries to voluntarily refrain from selling it — there are excellent native plants that fill the same niche in rock gardens (e.g. Sulphur Buckwheat). Ideally, we would like to see it declared a Noxious Weed in those counties where it has become a pest. This term has mostly been used to describe weeds that pose a threat to agriculture (e.g. Cheat Grass destroying rangelands), but is sometimes used more broadly. A plant that is a Noxious Weed one place may be irrelevant elsewhere (e.g. Kudzu Vine and Water Hyacinth are major pests in the southern US, but not here). Myrtle Spurge is not yet listed as a Noxious Weed anywhere in Utah, but it is in several other western states: in Colorado it is given the 'highest priority' status, which basically means destroy on sight.

We shall be cooperating with local agencies to help track and pull weeds such as this. If you are interested in helping with this contact:

Salt Lake County:	Kipp Lee (801-759-6204, kipp_lee@comcast.net) Bill Gray (801-532-3486, cyberflora@xmission.com)
Utah County:	Susan Garvin (801-756-6177, sgarvin@xmission.com)
Summit County:	Mindy Wheeler (801-699-5459, wheelermindy@yahoo.com)
Cache County	Steve Ripple (435-752-2732, steveripple@comcast.net) Dave Wallace (435-750-5913, dwallace@biology.usu.edu)

In May the Salt Lake chapter is hosting Sage Fitch of the Bonneville Cooperative Weed Management Area, who will talk about this specific problem, and about the more general one of fighting weeds along the Wasatch Front. See chapter schedules for details.

UNPS
 Utah Native Plant Society
 P.O. Box 520041
 Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0041

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Salt Lake City,
 Utah PERMIT No.
 327



Utah Ladyfinger
Astragalus utahensis

Bitsy Schultz

For latest UNPS and
 Utah native plant
 news go to:
www.unps.org
 and click on News

Utah Native Plant Society Membership and Information

New Member Renewal Gift

Name: _____
 Street: _____
 City/State: _____
 Zip: _____ Phone: _____
 Email: _____
 Chapter: _____

Check membership category desired:

- Student \$9.00
- Senior \$12.00
- Individual \$15.00
- Household \$25.00
- Sustaining \$40.00
- Supporting Org. \$55.00
- Corporate \$500.00
- Lifetime \$250.00
- Please send a complimentary copy of the Segó Lily to the above individual.

Please enclose a check, payable to Utah Native Plant Society and send it to:

Membership ,
 Utah Native Plant Society
 P.O.Box 520041,
 Salt Lake City,
 Utah 84152-0041

UTAH NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

President: Mindy Wheeler / Bill Gray
 President Elect:
 Chairman: Susan Garvin
 Treasurer: Celeste Kennard
 Secretary: Therese Meyer/Dave Wallace
 Newsletter Editor: Paula Longhurst

For more information about
 the Utah Native Plant Society
 call:

Bill King: 582-0432
 Susan Garvin: 356-5108
 Or write to: unps@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 Longhurst
 at plonghur@xmission.com.
**The deadline for next issue
 is 12th June, 2006**

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Cache: Steve Ripple
 Mountain (Summit): Mindy Wheeler
 Price (Carbon): Mike Hubbard
 Salt Lake: Kipp Lee
 Southern (Washington): Margaret Malm
 Utah Valley (Utah): Celeste Kennard
 Escalante (Garfield) : Kathy Munthe
 Manzanita (Kane): Walt Fertig

COMMITTEES

Horticulture:
 Conservation: Bill King/ Tony Frates
 Education:
 Invasive Species: Susan Garvin
 Communications: