



# NEWSLETTER

Vol. 40, No. 7

SEPTEMBER 2014

## NORTHERN NEVADA HAPPENINGS MEETINGS

We meet down the hall from the UNR herbarium in room 300G of Fleischman Agriculture, at the University of Nevada. This is just north of the intersection of 9th St. and Evans Ave. The elevator is located at the east end of the building. You can park just east of this in the lot on the southeast corner of Evans and Record Way. Social time starts at 7 pm and the program will start at 7:30 pm. If you would like to join any of the speakers for dinner beforehand, meet at Carrow's Restaurant on the northwest corner of Wells Avenue and 6th St. at 5:30 pm. NOTE: Enter the building under the breezeway on the west side. The outside door will be automatically locked at 7:30.

**SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>** – Jan Nachlinger will give a talk entitled **Alpine environments, flora, and the GLORIA project in the Sierra Nevada and Great Basin.**

**OCTOBER 2<sup>ND</sup>** – Second fall meeting for 2014. Speaker to be announced.

**NOVEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>** – Final fall meeting for 2014. Speaker to be announced.

## SOUTHERN NEVADA HAPPENINGS MEETINGS

Meetings are on the first Monday of every month starting at 6:30 pm. They are held at the U.S. Geological Survey office at 160 N. Stephanie Street in Henderson. Contact Cayenne Engel (cpepper3@gmail.com) if you have any questions or would like to be added to the notification by email list.

## EREMOPYRUM BONAEPARTIS by Arnold Tiehm

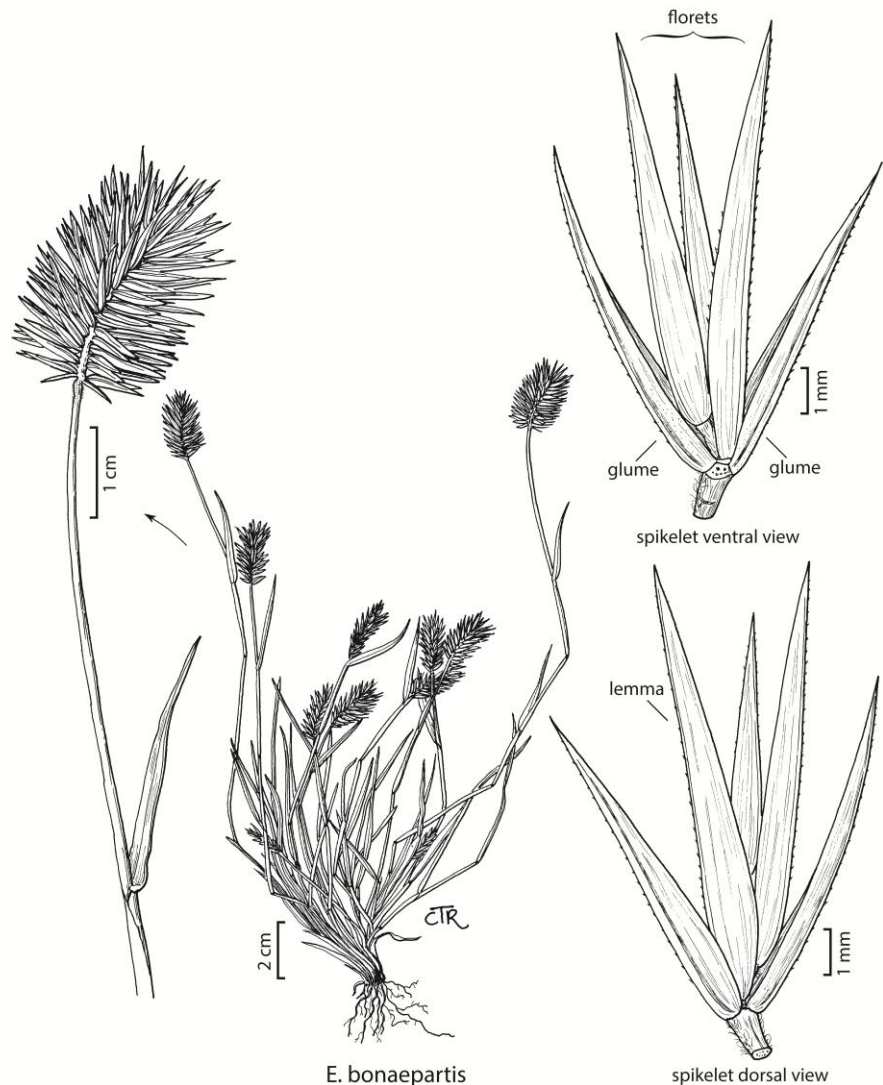
In early May I conducted a field training workshop that consisted of two days in the lab and one day in the field. I was ably assisted by Charlie Duncan and between the two of us we gathered lots of fresh material for dissection by the class. After lunch on the second day we tackled grasses and things that look similar to grasses like sedges and rushes. During lunch break Charlie had gathered some annual “wheat” grasses. When she showed these to me she commented that they were “quite large”. Well one look at the plant and I was totally flabbergasted. I did not know the grass but I knew it was not what Charlie had thought it to be, *Eremopyrum triticeum*. As luck would have it Mary Barkworth was sitting in on the workshop so I immediately asked for her opinion. Like me she knew it was not *E. triticeum* but believed it was in that genus. We then got out *Flora North America* (FNA) and readily keyed the plant to *E. bonaepartis*. A check of the distribution data in FNA showed it was only known from southern Arizona.

Wow! I am never happy about reporting new weeds in Nevada but this one was at least a little exciting. The questions just jumped out. How long had it been here? How did it get here? Did we have misidentified specimens in the herbarium? Well I cannot answer the first two questions. The answer to the third question is no, we did not have a specimen of *E. bonaepartis* from Nevada or from anywhere else for that matter.

So I searched the usual online sources for information. USDA Plants lists it for New York but not Arizona. A search of the Intermountain Herbaria Consortium database yielded some records from foreign countries and the only US records listed were plants

collected from experimental plots where they were planted. The California Herbaria Consortium also only listed US plants that were from experimental gardens. Mary has since seen a specimen from a burn area in northern Utah. So my guess is that it has been here for a while and has just gone unnoticed. Maybe the key to finding more invasives is to have more workshops!!

I have seen specimens of *E. triticeum* from Churchill, Elko, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Pershing, and Washoe Counties. I also saw it in Nye County when it was way past flower and not collectable. It is quite common at low elevations and will form monocultures especially around disturbed areas like cattle troughs, road sides, and even at the edge of alkali flats. The following illustration is from Flora North America 24: 255. 2007. Shown are the three species of *Eremopyrum* currently known from North America, all are introduced. Copyright Utah State University, illustrations by Cindy Roché. Used here with permission from Mary Barkworth.\*



**MELICA SUBULATA**

by Arnold Tiehm



Jan Nachlinger and I have been working on a floristic project in the Nevada portion of the Sierra Nevada. The focus of this work is to catalogue all of the plants who only get into Nevada in the Sierra. There are an amazing number of plants that are in the Sierra and also on Peavine. At this time we plan on including a section on this additional distribution. To accomplish this work we have searched the literature, been going through the specimens in the RENO herbarium, and, the most fun, have been doing field work. The field work has been concentrated in the Spooner Summit area and admittedly has been concentrated in wet areas. Also in this area are a lot of aspen groves which either border wet areas or are near them. One great thing about botanizing in the Sierra is the lack of grazing. In the Great Basin most aspen grove understory vegetation has been snipped and beaten down within about an inch of the ground. So it has been a pleasure to see aspen groves with an intact herbaceous flora.

In doing background work for this project *Melica subulata* came to light. The RENO herbarium contains a specimen collected in Douglas County, Genoa Peak Road, 13 Aug 1974, by Margaret Williams et al. The specimen is from well past prime flowering time and there only a few spikelets with florets. I checked Grasses of the Intermountain Region and noticed there was a dot in the middle of Nevada and that no counties were highlighted (Anderton & Barkworth, 2009). This means they knew of a report but had not seen a specimen. This put *Melica subulata* on my list of things to find and collect so the record of its occurrence in Nevada would be well documented. On a late June field trip Jan and I found a *Melica* in an aspen grove, made a nice collection, and were happy that we had found the elusive *M. subulata*. Then in July Matt Lavin, visiting from Montana, and I made a field trip to the same area. While I was pressing plants he was snooping around on a steep bank at the edge of an aspen grove and announced he has found *M. subulata*. Well the plant he brought back was not the one Jan and I had collected some weeks earlier. I mentioned this to Matt who assured me that he was quite familiar with *M. subulata* from Montana. He even showed me how the florets in *M. subulata* taper to rather sharp tips, unusual for a *Melica*. We

also stopped at the place where Jan and I had collected and were able to find the mystery plant, along with some *M. bulbosa*, and it was evident that we had three different species.

Back at the herbarium I dug out my previous collection and yes, Matt was right, it was not *M. subulata*. The plant he had discovered was indeed *M. subulata* and it was great to have such nice material. The mystery plant turned out to be *M. fugax* which in Nevada is known from Humboldt and Washoe Counties, and now from Douglas County. The florets do not taper to a point and as the plant matures the lower pedicels will spread to nearly right angles from the stem. Other *Melica* species known from Nevada are: *M. bulbosa*, known from all counties except Churchill, Clark, Lincoln, Lyon, and Pershing; *M. frutescens* known from Clark County; *M. imperfecta* known from Clark County; *M. spectabilis* known from Elko, Lander and Nye Counties; and *M. stricta* known from all counties except Clark and Lincoln.

The following illustration is from *Flora North America* 24: 96. 2007. Copyright Utah State University, illustration by Linda A. Vorobik. Used here with permission from Mary Barkworth.\*

Anderton, L.K. & M.E. Barkworth, Editors. 2009. *Grasses of the Intermountain Region*. Intermountain Herbarium, Utah State University, Logan, UT.\*

### CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

by Charlene Duncan, Conservation Committee Chair

This is a report on issues of concern to native plant enthusiasts, the introduction of exotic species for agricultural purposes (i.e. forage kochia, *Kochia prostrata*), as well as the decline of native pollinators and honeybee health. Specifically, it addresses a conference call with ARS in Washington, DC and H.R. 4790, **Highways Bettering the Economy and Environment Pollinator Protection Act**. Information on a related issue, Senate Bill 1153 and HR 996, regarding risk assessment for invasive characteristics and regulation of exotic fish and wildlife species prior to importation is included.

The Nevada Native Plant Society participates in the Native Plant Society Coalition, a working group of western plant societies from Arizona, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, and Utah concerned with the use of non-native plant material for forage production and restoration on Federal lands in the Intermountain West. The conservation committee represented NNPS in a conference call in April, 2014 of the NPSC with ARS addressing the transparency of selection, evaluation, and release of 'improved' plant material; additionally, a request was expressed for more extensive monitoring of introduced species impacts on native landscapes. Results of the call determined:

1. Native plant societies should have a place at the table as stakeholders. As such the coalition will send 2 representatives to the ARS Forage and Range Research Laboratory Focus Group annual meetings and one (1) delegate to the Executive Committee meeting.

Erin Gray, Oregon and Peter Lesica, Montana will be representatives at the Spokane, WA meeting in October.

2. Native plant societies are encouraged to work with state ARS locations and focus groups. Nevada ARS contact: Dr. Mark Weltz, Research Leader, Great Basin Rangelands Research; [mark.weltz@ars.usda.gov](mailto:mark.weltz@ars.usda.gov) ; (775) 784-6057 ext. 229
3. NPS will be contacted by FRRL prior to release of plant materials for input prior to general release. Input should include statements, with justification, of benefit as well as where introduction would not be beneficial.

A summary of the conference call may be obtained by request from: Charlene Duncan, NNPS Conservation Chair; [cirsium.down@gmail.com](mailto:cirsium.down@gmail.com) ; (775)530-7458.

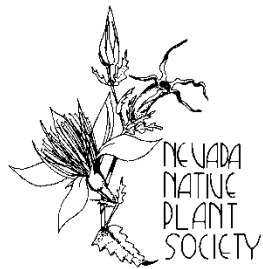
H.R. 4790 (**Highways BEE Act**) directs the Secretary of Transportation to use existing programs and funding (no new authorities, programs, or mandates, except for expanded eligibility in designated spending account) to encourage willing State DOTs and other ROW managers to participate in IVM and pollinator habitat efforts. The objectives are to encourage the use of 1) integrated vegetative management; 2) native plantings; 3) facilitate research and demonstration projects on the economic and environmental benefits and best practices for IVM, reduced mowing and native plantings for pollinator habitat; and 4) report to Congress on actions taken on highway right -of-ways managed by State Departments of Transportation.

A complete text of the proposed legislation and letter of support/petition from organizations and individuals may be accessed at: <http://pollinator.org/BEEAct.htm> . There are also sections for comments and other suggested actions to be taken. Nevada has six (6) signatories to the petition at this time.

Senate Bill 1153 and HR 996, **The Invasive Fish and Wildlife Prevention Act** would amend the Lacey Act to give the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service the authority to prevent invasions using modern scientific approaches and directs the Service to expedite its decisions to label injurious species. Some wording of the text, presently removed, would limit the importation of 'invasive plants'. A fact sheet on the proposed bills, links to complete texts and a discussion of a competing HR bill with reservations may be accessed at: <http://www.necis.net/> .

Nevada Native Plant Society  
PO Box 8965  
Reno NV 89507-8965

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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Please make checks payable and mail to: NNPS • P.O. Box 8965 • Reno, NV 89507