



# NEVADA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

VOLUME 42 NUMBER 8 - OCTOBER 2016

*Sclerocactus nyensis*

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## SOCIETY NEWS

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### VOLUNTEER NEEDED FOR NNPS TREASURER

The treasurer is a vital position for our society. Without a treasurer we cannot receive membership dues or pay for society expenses such as newsletter printing or travel reimbursements for speakers. A treasurer should be detail oriented and comfortable using Quickbooks and PayPal but an accounting degree is definitely not necessary. Due to advances in internet banking, our treasurer does not need to live in Reno.

Our current treasurer has served in the position for several years and he has decided to step down to pursue other interests. If you would like to volunteer for the position, please email Janel at [president@nvnps.org](mailto:president@nvnps.org) or Sarah at [vicepresident@nvnps.org](mailto:vicepresident@nvnps.org).

#### Treasurer's Duties

1. Receive payments (by check or PayPal) for membership dues and donations. Deposit checks to Wells Fargo checking account.
2. Send payments (by check or PayPal) for society expenses such as newsletter printing, postage, hospitality, etc.
3. Record payments received and sent in Quickbooks.
4. File tax exempt postcard with IRS.
5. File list of officers with Nevada Secretary of State and pay yearly fee.
6. Prepare summary financial statement for annual board meeting in January.

**Events subject to change.**

Visit [nvnps.org](http://nvnps.org) for updates.

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## NORTHERN NEVADA EVENTS

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**UNR is enforcing parking regulations in the lot to the south of the Fleishman Ag building. Details below.**

**October 6** – Mare Nazaire, a 2011 recipient of NNPS' Margaret Williams Research Grant will present diversification in *Mertensia* (*Boraginaceae*), with emphasis on Nevada's species.

**November 3** – Brian Smithers, PhD candidate in Ecology at UC Davis and a recipient of NNPS' Margaret Williams Research Grant, will speak on tree species range shifts above treeline in the Great Basin and our disappearing alpine habitat. We will also hold the annual election of society officers.

**Y**ou are invited to join our speakers before the meetings for dinner at 5:30 at **Great Full Gardens**, 555 South Virginia Street.

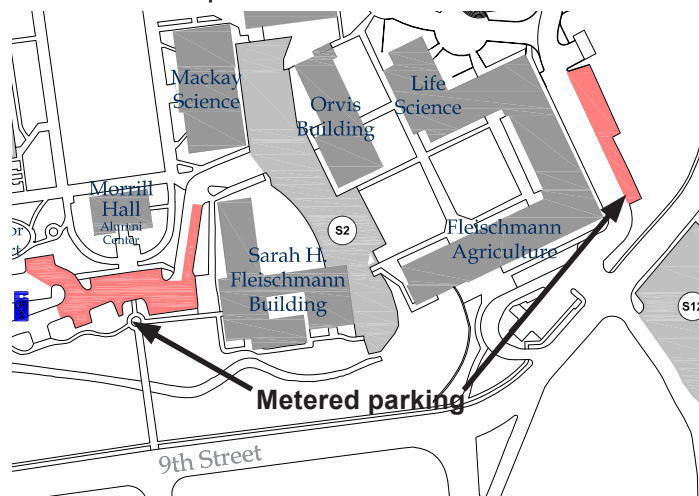
Meetings are in room 300G of the Fleischman Agriculture Building on the UNR campus, north of 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Evans Avenue.

Enter the building under the breezeway on the west side near the street. There's an elevator at the east end of the building. Meet on the third floor and down the hall from the UNR herbarium.

Social time starts at 7:00 PM and the program starts at 7:30. The outside door will be automatically locked at 7:30.

**UNR is now enforcing parking in the lot on the southeast corner of Evans and Record Way.** First time offenders will be issued a warning and a ticket will be issued on subsequent violations. Several NNPS members have received warnings.

Parking passes are available from the university – see [www.unr.edu/parking/permits-and-fees](http://www.unr.edu/parking/permits-and-fees) for more information. Parking may be available on the street. A small metered parking lot is along the east side of the Fleishman Agriculture building and another metered lot is located two blocks west at the Center Street entrance. A portion of the UNR parking map is shown below and the official map is available [here](#).



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## SOUTHERN NEVADA EVENTS

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**S**outhern Nevada Meetings are held in Henderson the first Monday of every month from 6:30-7:30 PM (unless otherwise noted when holidays fall on first Mondays) at the U.S. Geological Survey office at 160 North Stephanie Street.

Our program coordinator is Lesley DeFalco. If you would like email updates for Southern Nevada events, please email her at [defalco@usgs.gov](mailto:defalco@usgs.gov) and ask to be added to the list.



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## BOTANIZING NOTEBOOK: LOVE THOSE BELLY PLANTS!

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▲ *Phacelia bicolor*

Story by Arnold Tiehm  
Photographs by Jan Nachlinger

The first summer I spent botanizing, in 1974, was mostly spent on Peavine Mountain north of Reno and in the nearby Sierra Nevada. I went on numerous trips with Margaret Williams and several with Tom Howell who was based at the California Academy of Sciences. Tom was the most amazing botanizer I have ever seen. He would go to the drying edges of a meadow, get on all fours, and spend two hours finding new plant after new plant. Many of the plants he would discover he termed “belly plants.”

This obvious reference is to the level of proximity he would get to his subjects. I once saw him find four species of annual *Juncus* in an area about six feet on a side. I learned to join him in kneeling while botanizing and it is a ritual I still gladly practice. After all, if you are making a plant list for an area a tall pine tree and a belly plant both count as one.

Jan Nachlinger and I took a tour of some belly plants around Carson City this past spring. In a previous newsletter [42(4): 7] I wrote a note about seeing *Linanthus bigelovii* south of Dayton. Jan and I were on our way home following a fruitless search of the same area for the *Linanthus* and decided to stop at the Silver Saddle Ranch on the east side of Prison Hill in Carson City. I had never been in that area but knew that is was home to a population of *Erythranthe carsonensis*, better known as the Carson Valley monkeyflower – a belly plant and a species I had yet to see. The outwash fans there are very sandy and there were lots of diminutive denizens in flower like *Phacelia bicolor*, *Calyptidium roseum*, *Gilia sinuata*, and *Camissonia pusilla* – all easy to ignore when walking but lovely up close. If these were in bloom, perhaps *Erythranthe carsonensis* was as well!

*Pectocarya penicillata* quickly caught my eye. Also known as sleeping combseed, this bristly-stemmed prostrate annual rarely exceeds a few centimeters in height and is graced with delicate, pearlescent white flowers. Occurring from southern Canada south to northern Baja California and east to Idaho and Wyoming, it is known in Nevada from Carson City, Churchill, Elko, Humboldt,



Lander, and Washoe Counties. It is always a pleasure to encounter this unique plant. On closer inspection we discovered lots of ***Nemacladus sigmoides***. The plant's very narrow stems and branches, tiny leaves, and brownish color allow it to blend in with the sand, making it hard to find. I have looked for it on sand on bright days when the only way to find it is to see

the dark shadows cast on the light soil. I had previous records of *N. sigmoides* from Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Washoe Counties so Carson City was a new record for me. We were only able to find a lone *Erythranthe carsonensis*. I was very impressed by the vivid yellow corolla lobes with their distinctive red spots.

We then went south of Carson City and east on Sunridge Road. We stopped at a somewhat sandy spot that was home to a large population of Carson Valley monkeyflowers. A closer look revealed *Pectocarya penicillata* and *Nemacladus sigmoides* were present here, too, both of which were new county records for me as we had made it to Douglas County. Further inspection revealed two more petite jewels - ***Minuartia pusilla*** and ***Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*** - both members of the pink family, ***Caryophyllaceae***. *Minuartia*



▲▲ *Calyptridium roseum* ▲ *Nemacladus sigmoides*





▲ *Pectocarya penicillata* and ▼ with nutlets







*pusilla*, long known as *Arenaria pusilla*, has a characteristic pink family look with opposite leaves from swollen nodes and pointy sepals, similar to its larger relative, the carnation. It can have petals that are shorter than the sepals and sometimes the petals are lacking. It is definitely not showy and the entire plant looks like the inflorescence of one of the perennial *Minuartias* like *M. nuttallii*.



▲▲ *Erythranthe carsonensis*

▲ *Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*

*Minuartia pusilla* occurs from Canada south through Washington, Oregon, and Idaho to California, Nevada, and Utah (Holmgren & Holmgren, 2012). I only had Nevada records from Storey and Washoe Counties so again, we found a new record from Douglas County.

Scattered amongst the other, showier plants was our final belly plant of the day and one that defies description:

***Loeflingia***. It lacks petals or they are so rudimentary that they are hardly noticeable. It has short glandular hairs that are not evident to the naked eye and at best the entire plant seldom covers more than a few square inches. It reminds me of a young ***Cryptantha circumscissa*** but *Cryptantha* has a lot of gray hairs and evident white petals. My best description is that it is one of those plants that you just don't know! I previously knew ***Loeflingia squarrosa* var. *artemisiarum*** from Carson City, Lyon, and Washoe Counties so again, Douglas County was a new record for me. Its overall distribution is Washington, Oregon, Wyoming, California and western Nevada (Holmgren & Holmgren, 2012).

Brushing the sand from our elbows and knees, we returned to the car and made our way home, happy that a wonderful crop of belly flowers had made a delightful end to our field trip.

## LITERATURE CITED

Holmgren, N.H. & P.K. Holmgren. 2012. Caryophyllaceae pp. 387-470. In: N.H. Holmgren, P.K. Holmgren, J.L. Reveal and Collaborators. Intermountain Flora 2, part A: 1-729. New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY.





▲▲ *Minuartia pusilla* in fruit

▼ NNPS Member John Weiser demonstrates proper belly flower observation technique (R. Tietje)



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Gifts, and bequests are tax deductible.

Your donation in any amount is appreciated \$\_\_\_\_\_

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