



NEVADA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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Helianthus nuttallii - J. Nachlinger

SOCIETY NEWS

NORTHERN NEVADA EVENTS

February 2 – Janel Johnson looks back on 2016's phenomenal Carson Valley monkeyflower super-bloom.

March 2 – Annie Overlin, UNR Research Scientist, will give a talk entitled "Revegetation of an agricultural wetland: utilizing seed bank and response to biomass management to inform restoration and management."

April 6 – Arnold "Jerry" Tiehm, Herbarium Curator at UNR's Museum of Natural History, will provide the program on 2016's botanical surprises from northwestern Nevada.

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 9th 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.

Parking is enforced in the lot on the SE corner of Evans and Record Way.

Parking passes and maps are available from the university – see www.unr.edu/parking for more information.

SOUTHERN NEVADA EVENTS

February 6 – Melissa Sanders of the Great Basin Institute and Southern Nevada Office of the BLM will present "Seeds of Success and the Federal Native Plant Materials Development Program in Southern Nevada."

March 6 – Dr. Jim Boone, Ecologist and founder of BirdandHike.com will present "Gold Butte and the Biology of Elevation Gradients."

Southern 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 and ask to be added to the list.

Events subject to change. Visit nvnp.org for updates.



BOTANIZING NOTEBOOK: THE MOSQUITO MOUNTAINS PART III

*Story by Arnold Tiehm
Photographs by Jan Nachlinger*

On August 10-12th Jan Nachlinger and I returned to the Mosquito Mountains in the extreme northwest corner of Washoe County for the third time in 2016. Often during the late season in desert-like areas such as this it seems as though everything in flower is either a composite or a chenopod. Thankfully that was not the case on this trip as we encountered a delightfully diverse group of plants in full bloom.

We started out near the hay meadows east of the Coleman Valley Ranch. Our first stop on a ditch bank covered in blooming plants yielded ***Persicaria lapathifolia***, ***Muhlenbergia asperifolia***, and two ***Rumex***, ***maritimus* var. *fueginus*** and ***salicifolius* var. *triangularis***. There was also a small population of a ***Glyceria*** which I thought might be ***declinata***, a species I had never seen with its feet in the ground.

Emerging from the ditch we continued to a sinuous hay meadow that had previously been mowed. However, down the middle of the mowed area was a small drainage that was untouched by the mower. In the midst of this narrow drainage was a bevy of rather tall plants in flower and fruit. The most obvious was ***Helianthus nuttallii*** with its conspicuous yellow-rayed heads at the tips of six-foot-tall stems. Another yellow-flowered composite was ***Senecio hydrophilus***. It did not quite reach the height of the *Helianthus* but its glaucous leaves and numerous heads made it just as eye-catching.

Another six-footer was ***Cicuta maculata*** or water hemlock. This poisonous member of the carrot family, ***Apiaceae***, has the toxin concentrated in the carrot-like roots. It was mostly in fruit but there were still a few persistent white flowers to be seen. Two other plants in flower that reached heights between three and four feet were red-flowered ***Castilleja exilis*** and white- to light pink-rayed ***Symphyotrichum*** [aster] ***eatonii***. All five of these plants are widespread

in appropriate habitats throughout the intermountain region.

After our first stops around the hay meadows, we went to the Coleman Valley Ranch reservoir which we had visited on our previous trips. The low water had exposed extensive mud flats. We were just a little early for the late season mud flat flora but managed to collect two species of ***Crypsis***, ***alopecuroides*** and ***schoenoides***. They were both prostrate and rather diminutive and it took some effort to collect enough in flower to make several specimens of each. Back at the herbarium, I examined them under the microscope to make sure I was not confusing the two species and realized we had actually collected three species of *Crypsis* as there were plants of ***C. vaginiflora*** mixed in with the other two. Just as incredibly, Jan had managed to photograph all three! So much for our field identification capabilities. These are the only species of *Crypsis* known from Nevada and we found them all at one location!

Crypsis alopecuroides is quite widespread in Nevada and I had earlier





The author with *Cicuta*,
Symphotrichum, and *Helianthus*

records from Douglas, Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lyon, Ormsby (now Carson City), and Washoe counties. *Crypsis schoenoides* was previously known from Churchill, Clark, Douglas, Lyon, and Washoe counties. The only records I had of *C. vaginiflora* from Nevada were from Lyon County. Again, another great find from the Mosquito Mountains! It is interesting that *C. vaginiflora* is not in the new Oregon Flora (Wilson et al., 2015).

As the crow flies we were only a mile from Oregon. In early January of this year I was at the Northern California Botanists Symposium in Chico, California and asked one of the authors of the grass treatment for a copy of the **Oregon Flora**. She told me that *C. vaginiflora* has since been found in Oregon near the Idaho border. Dang! I thought I would be the first one to go back and collect *Crypsis vaginiflora* in Oregon.



Crypsis alopecuroides

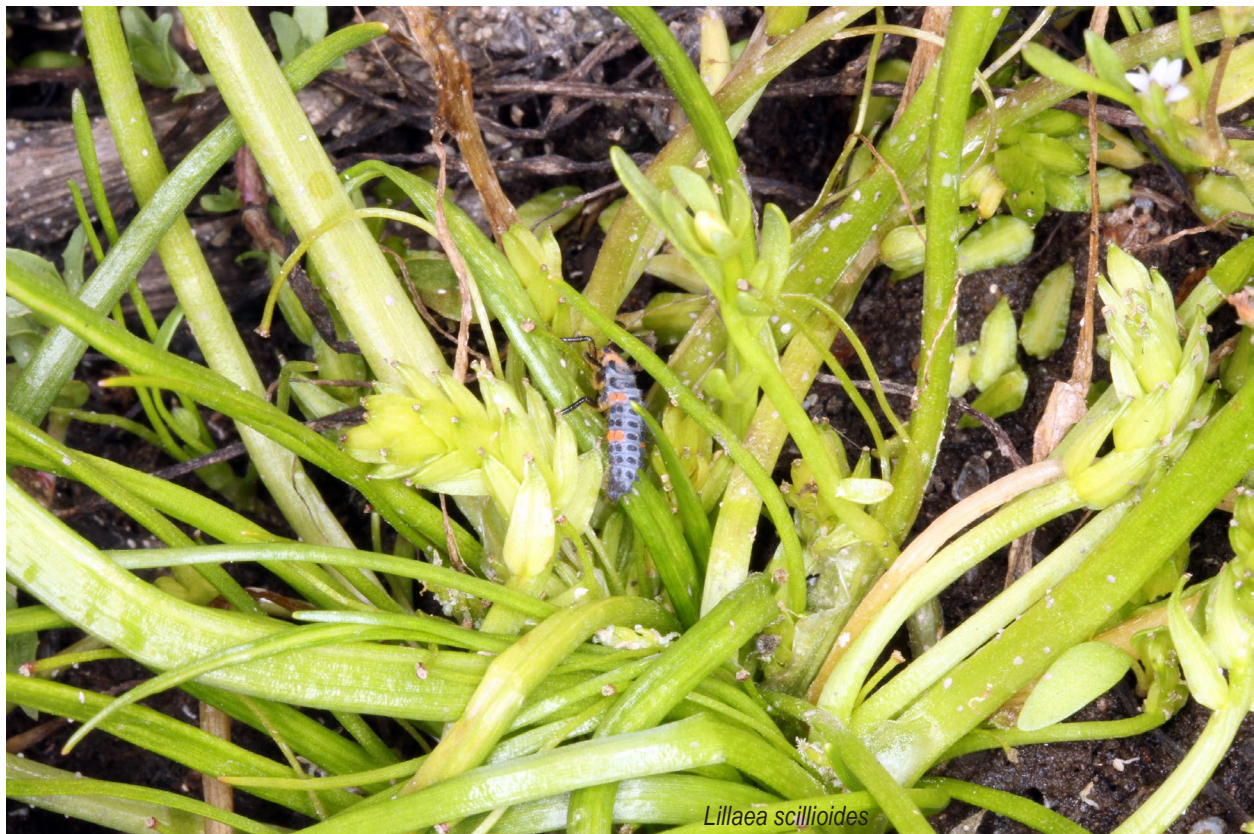
Crypsis schoenoides

Crypsis schoenoides and *C. vaginiflora*

From the reservoir we travelled to just below the crest of the Mosquito Mountains where we had previously surveyed a wet meadow and small stock pond. The meadow and pond were now quite dry but a short distance down the drainage we found a stock pond that was still fairly full of water. Around the edges of the pond we found *Lilaea scilloides*, a plant that defies description, belonging to the arrow-grass family, *Juncaginaceae*. It has narrow, spongy leaves that are nearly all basal and spikes of female and perfect flowers. In water, the spikes are barely emergent or float on the surface. When the water recedes and the plants are exposed, the spikes tend to bend or fall over. This is probably the result of the fruit maturing and becoming too heavy to be supported by the spongy stems. *Lilaea* has been found in Nevada in Washoe, Elko, Humboldt, and Lander counties.



Castilleja exilis



Lilaea scilloides



Lillaea scillioides



Glyceria borealis



Glyceria declinata

The next day we again hiked into Twelvemile Creek. For a good portion of our botanizing we had to wade in the creek. While doing this we collected several water plants including *Sagittaria cuneata*, *Alisma triviale*, and, again, what I took to be *Glyceria declinata* – the same plant we had found the day before at the ranch. Later, back at the UNR Herbarium, I was examining the specimens from the trip under the ‘scope. As usual, by the time I get my collections dried, bundled, and delivered to the university they are in no specific order and the first *Glyceria* specimen to come to the top happened to be the one from Twelvemile

Creek. Closer study revealed it was not *G. declinata* but *G. borealis* instead. The only records I have of *borealis* from Nevada are from Big Meadows and Rock Lake in the Sierra Nevada and from



Stachys palustris

Washoe Valley, all in Washoe County. Disappointed, I assumed the specimen from Coleman Valley Ranch would also turn out to be *borealis*. About three weeks later I finally worked my way down to the collection from the ranch finally and bingo! - it turned out to be the very different *G. declinata*. I had been vindicated. *Glyceria declinata* has long been known in Nevada from around Lee on the west side of the Ruby Mountains in



Elko County. In 2007 it turned up in the Spring Mountains of Clark County. It is an introduced plant and I am sure it will turn up in more places in Nevada.

Back at Twelvemile Creek, we worked our way west from the pole line road to the drainage where we had found *Hesperolinum micranthum* on an earlier expedition. We had noted a *Persicaria* there and now it was in full flower and was easily identified as *P. coccinea*. We descended down the drainage to the creek near the Oregon border and then botanized the creek to the east and eventually arrived where we had been on the previous trip. We found a couple more aquatics in and about the creek including *Sparganium emersum* and *Potamogeton epihydrus*. On the banks we found *Stachys palustris* which I had known in Nevada only from Elko and Humboldt counties. It's always nice to add a county record to the list of the state flora.

After hiking out of the creek gorge, we headed south and camped on the rolling mesa south of the main road. There we found *Leucophysalis nana*, a member of

the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*). This white-flowered plant was documented in Nevada from the Sierra Nevada and Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge in Washoe County and from the Pine Nut Mountains in Douglas County. I have often thought it should occur in between these sites and this is certainly a plant we will keep looking for in future wanderings.

LITERATURE CITED

Wilson, B.L., R. Brainerd & N. Otting.
2015. *Poaceae* pp. 331-492. In: S.C. Meyers, T. Jaster, K.E. Mitchell & L.K. Hardison. *Flora of Oregon 1*: 1-592. Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, TX. USA.

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