

## AZ Native Plant Society Yuma Chapter

### Chapter Report for Jan 01-Apr 14, 2024



#### Activities

The Yuma Chapter is having a heyday. Who could resist, given the joyous explosion of low desert wildflowers? We've thrown out our routine calendar of "1 meeting and 1 field trip", and we just go, go, go. We have had a few meetings that have been more hands-on such as "the science and art of mounting voucher specimens", and especially showcasing the botanical art of our emerging superstar, Louise Fleurs (see the beavertail cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) above ).

Given the exceptional bloom in the Yuma vicinity, our focus has gravitated to getting out to see the beauty of it all. We've made sure to check on our usual haunts: Yuma Conservation Garden, Telegraph Pass, and the I-8 Ogilby Road exit. For Telegraph Pass the elephant trees (*Bursera microphylla*) were downright opulent.



Elephant tree lit in winter sunshine at Telegraph Pass



Field trippers: Jacob, Karen, Val, Patti, John, Deirdre & Lonna

The day at the Ogilby Road I-8 off-ramp was overwhelmingly productive. When you speed by heading to San Diego (right!) the landscape looks pretty bleak. But what a spectacular display when you stop and mosey around.



Val with an ajo lily (*Hesperocallis undulata*) that's almost as tall as she is. Tracings in the sand revealing the wind direction of the most recent windstorm exposing the crinkle mat (*Tiquilia* spp.) roots (shadow of the hand gives an idea of scale (a convenient accident)).

In addition, we had tours that were new for many. Karen Reichhardt led us through a riparian jewel at Yuma's East Wetlands: an inspiring ecological restoration site that has gone from salt cedar and giant reed to cottonwood willow canopy with lower story mesquites, and wetland sedges and cattails.



Looking upriver at the confluence with the Gila. The East Wetlands is on the lower right. Karen Reichhardt enlightening us on the restored riparian plant community

Saving the best for last, our biggest event in forever, the Yuma Chapter took a day trip to Tinajas Altas (High Tanks). After the long, bumpy ride, they were not disappointed,



A great turnout in the good hands of former BMGR Ranger, Del Maslen, sharing his stories and his expertise.



Some of the encountered plants: chuparosa (*Justicia californica*), "belly flowers", & desert fir (*Poecephyllum schottii*)

Yuma Chapter also wants to share the passing of our Elizabeth Moody this past year. She may not have been that well known outside of our corner of the state, but for the Yuma area, she was definitely the beginning and the ending – the inspiration of anything to do with plants. She was a long-time science teacher with a love of plants and gardening. She was a garden club maven. She and her husband were the inspiration for Yuma's Robert J Moody Demonstration Garden.

For us in the Native Plants Society, there would be no Yuma Chapter without Elizabeth Moody. We like to tell the story how she lured a passel of us native plant lovers over for tea. Those of us with the invite were puzzled, but never would any of us have considered ignoring a request from Mrs. Moody. Once she had us captive, she wouldn't let our cries of "we're too busy" and such sway her. She blocked all the routes of escape, and no one could leave until we had consented to restart the Chapter with interim officers in place and plans for venue and initial programs outlined. At least that's how I remember it.

It goes without saying that she will be forever missed in our community, but we also know how eternally blessed we are to have had her with us the many joyful years that we did.

Lastly, I am sad to report that stink net has finally found its way to our locale. At the moment, there are 3 distinct footholds where it has been observed. We thank Jim Malusa for alerting us to the threat. It would be great to see if we can hold it off for a few more years.



***Elizabeth M. Moody***  
***May 21, 1918 – July 25, 2023***