



Refuge Update

April 2023

Published quarterly by the Amigos de la Sevilleta

Board meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month; all are welcome. The next Board meeting is Tuesday, April 18th at 2:00PM at the Visitor Center.

Refuge Manager's Update

Jeff Sanchez

"The Little Things in Wildlife"

Some of you may know that I have two children, a 10-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter. Just about every day they pass by the farm fields of Los Lunas on their way to school and observe the cranes, geese and ducks that grace us with their presence for approximately 6 months each year. Upon my return from work each day, they report how the crane and duck numbers have changed and recently noticed that the once large flocks are beginning to dwindle down as the warm, windy days of spring arrive. My kids also always share their report on the miniature horse they feverishly look for every morning, which they have affectionately named Herman.

I feel extremely fortunate to have children interested in the outdoors, animals, and the wild. I know that this interest likely comes from their accessibility to wild places and the fact that my wife and I have exposed them to some of the most beautiful and wild places in New Mexico. However, I am also saddened knowing that most

kids, and adults for that matter, may never notice these subtle changes within our beautiful state. Some simply do not know where to begin or what to look for. Some likely do not know how to



Dragonfly nymphs

appreciate nature or may have been taught to fight nature rather than embrace it. I'm sure most people appreciate the cute and cuddly

Herman often, as I admit he is awkwardly cute, but what about the amazing reptile, amphibian and small mammal community that support natural ecosystems and other wildlife just beyond the concrete and houses? The little things in life can sometimes be the most memorable if you know where and how to look.



With that said, one of our main goals for this wonderful refuge is to share and teach our local community about the importance of natural places. We have a great opportunity to partner with an array of conservation-minded groups and teach our local community how to appreciate and conserve our lands. On Saturday, May 20th, we

will all come together here at Sevilleta NWR to Celebrate the refuge's 50th anniversary (Sevilleta Spring Fiesta) and share our experiences with the local community. Partners from other refuges, local organizations and agencies will be here to help you learn about nature and the great opportunities the state of New Mexico has to offer. We will have live animals and a ton of kids' activities, including a wildlife treasure hunt where kids can earn prizes after experiencing unique, hands-on opportunities with wildlife. We will have food, games, arts and crafts, demonstrations, guided nature walks and much more. We will also be introducing/unveiling to the public a unique wildlife species that will soon call Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge its home, and you will get to see a live example of this beautiful animal.

Everyone is welcome to attend, even Herman!

For more information, please visit the Amigos de la Sevilleta website: <https://www.amigosdelasevilleta.org/> and click on "Fiesta"



Birds being banded



President's Message

Colin Barnett

A few weeks ago, I volunteered to be one of three drivers to take a group out to Silver Creek for a geology tour led by Kevin Hobbs of the NM Bureau of Geology. Amigos board members Alan

Sauter and Chuck Kooshian also volunteered as drivers. Accompanying us was Mike Chavez, who shared his unparalleled knowledge of the refuge's ecology and local history.



Geologist Kevin Hobbs animates millions of years of geologic history.



Silver Creek Geology Tour



We drove around, not over, tire-puncturing dead acacia branches in the road.

Tour members scramble up San Lorenzo Canyon



Naturalist Mike Chavez points out some of the local landmarks.



Geologist Kevin Hobbs describes the terrain.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

On March 25, Refuge Manager Jeff Sanchez and Visitor's Services Manager Jeannine Hunter served up a tasty meal of appreciation to the volunteers who help out at the refuge. The Amigos contributed to the food and the Seville staff provided the labor at this annual event, the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner.

We want to thank all the volunteers for their service, which includes fence maintenance, driving, front desk duties, nature store help, tour-leading, planting, and many other types of assistance. The volunteers make it easier to keep the refuge running.



Jeannine Hunter and Jeff Sanchez served a variety of sweet and savory fare at the dinner honoring volunteers for their invaluable service.



The Founding of the Amigos de la Sevilleta

Penny Lommen

I was going through some files recently and came upon some newsletters from early years of the Amigos organization. The newsletter from March 2007 bore the headline "Amigos de la Sevilleta Founded"! The following information is taken from that newsletter.

Amigos de la Sevilleta was founded on November 15, 2006 following several months of meetings, during which organizing committee members met with refuge management to define areas in which a citizen support group could assist the refuge. By-laws were approved in December of 2006. Amigos is governed by a Board of Directors, consisting of President, vice president, treasurer, secretary and three directors-at-large, together with non-voting liaison members appointed by the refuge management and the University of New Mexico.

The mission statement at that time said that the purpose of the Amigos was to support the Sevilleta NWR in the conservation of wildlife and habitats through environmental education and research. While the wording of the mission statement has varied over the years, the original reasoning remains.

I invite everyone reading this to join as a volunteer at our refuge. We are the largest refuge in New Mexico and the eighth largest refuge in the contiguous United States. Right now, we are operating with three and a half employees and a few volunteers. Join us, there are numerous jobs available. Please contact the refuge if you are interested.

Founding Board Members

- John Bertrand
- John Carangelo
- Martha Carangelo
- Betty Davis
- Dana Davis
- Gail Gerber
- Beverly Junger
- Kim King Warren
- Will Kolbenschlag
- Don Natvig
- Judith Phillips
- Dennis Prichard
- Terry Tadano
- Nyleen Troxel Stowe
- Karin Urban
- Jim Wolfe



Treasurer's Report Amigos de la Sevilleta 2022 Financial Statement

Penny Lommen

Nature Store

Gross Income	\$12,044.55
Less Purchased Merchandise	<u>\$7746.46</u>
	\$4298.09
Less Expenses	<u>\$917.78</u>
Net Income	\$3380.31

Nature Store Bank Balance on 12/31/2022	\$12,304.98
Inventory Value on 12/31/2022	\$7407.82

General Fund

Gross Income	\$9244.65
Expenses	<u>\$7367.73</u>
Net Income	\$18,76.92

General Fund Bank Balance on 12/31/2022	\$26,132.59
\$5017.91 Restricted Funds	
\$21,114.68 Unrestricted Funds	

Every year we file reports with the IRS, the New Mexico Secretary of State and the New Mexico Attorney General. These are mandatory for us to stay in business as a non-profit, charitable organization.



Friendly Faces at the Visitors Center

Rex Meyers

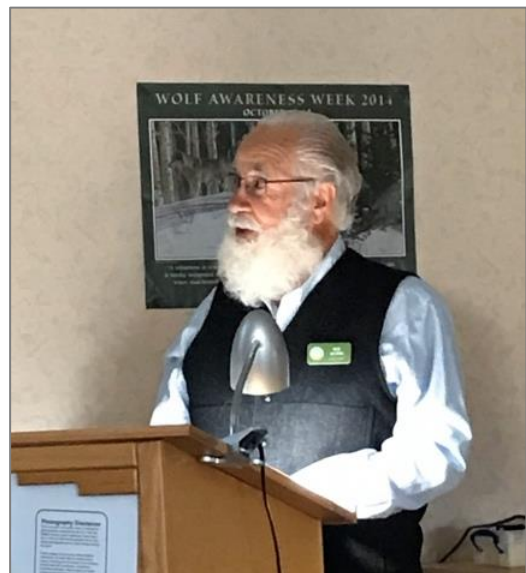


Pete and Dawn will be the RV Volunteers greeting visitors at the May 20 Fiesta. They call home “any place where we have our RV parked” and have parked their RV at Sevilleta since the end of January. Earlier volunteering stints include Washington, Arizona, and Oregon – Silver Falls State Park in Oregon a particular

favorite. Both agree that they love the vastness of Sevilleta National Wildlife Refuge, and are happy seeing visitors discover its beauty, enjoy its vistas, and hike its trails. And YES, they are Amigos members. On behalf of Amigos: Thank you, Thank you, Thank you for greeting Sevilleta’s visitors.

Lecture and Tour

On March 25, historian and Amigos Board member Rex Myers gave a fascinating lecture on the history of the Sevilleta Land Grant and its development as a ranch. After the lecture, about half of the attendees signed up for a tour of sites on the refuge related to its days as a ranching operation. The tour will be led by Rex on April 1.



The Apache Plume A Pollinator's Delight

Sandy Barnett

In March Amigos board members Colin Barnett and Rex Meyers added an Apache Plume, *Fallugia paradoxa*, to the garden area in front of the Visitor Center. *Fallugia*, the only member of its genus, was a wonderful choice not only for its beauty, long period of blossoming and significant pollinator value, but its drought tolerance. It is native throughout all four southwestern deserts,



L-R Rex Meyers (Amigos Secretary) and Colin Barnett (Amigos President) planting an Apache Plume in front of the Visitor Center. At full growth the bush will be 4-5 ft tall and as wide. Photo: Susan Richards.

the Mojave, Chihuahuan, Great Basin, and Sonoran, with a range from southeastern California and southern Nevada, to southern Colorado, west Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, and into northern Mexico and Baja California. (The first specimens used to describe the species in 1825 came from Mexico.) Its characteristic habitat is dry rocky slopes, open woods, and



An Apache plume heavily laden with fruit.

Photo: Eldorado Windy Farm

canyon bottoms, often in chaparral, pinyon-juniper, and pine communities at elevations of 3,000-9000 ft depending on location. It is hardy to -30F!

Fallugia is a deciduous to semi-evergreen erect shrub in the rose family. It has attractive peeling light grey (heat-reflective) bark on its many thin branches. The leaves show many adaptations for



The flowers of Apache Plume attract bees and butterflies. Photo: High Country Gardens

life in the desert: small leaf size reducing the surface area for water loss, deeply lobed shape that increases the ability of the leaves to dissipate heat, hairy coat on the top surface that helps to shade the leaves and reduce air flow (and evaporative water loss) across the surface, silvery underside that reflects heat, and orientation of the leaves on the branches that reduces exposure to the sun.

Fallugia blooms in the spring, and sometimes again in the fall, with 2-inch white rose-like flowers bearing five rounded petals. The bush is quite beautiful when the silky-plumed seed heads develop. They start out green then mature to white or pink over several months. It is these

feathery puffs, reminiscent of the feathered headdress of the Apache, that inspired the common name for the plant. The fruit is dispersed when the wind catches the feathery plumes and blows the fruit away.

The flowers of *Fallugia* are a magnet for bees and butterflies, and the seeds attract birds. It provides valuable browse for mule deer and other hoof stock particularly during winter months when other options are limited.

Historically, indigenous people in the Southwest used bundles of twigs from *Fallugia* as brooms and older stems for arrow shafts. All plant parts also had various medicinal uses.

New at the Nature Store

Susan Richards



The Nature Store is open when the visitor center is open. All profits are returned to the refuge for programming. You pay no taxes on purchases.



Facebook Activity

Susan Richards

We currently have 909 followers; we have members from 9 foreign countries. Our exposure continues to grow if you use FB, please share our posts and encourage your friends to follow us.



Agave heavily laden with fruit in the foreground of this photo taken at Sevilleta in April 2017 by Lenore Goodell

Contacts

Amigos web site: <https://www.amigosdelasevilleta.org>

Amigos on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/amigossevilleta>

Refuge Web Site: <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/sevilleta>

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Editor's Note

Items for consideration in the *Refuge Update* are encouraged.

Please email your submission in Word format to sdrandl72@gmail.com.

Past editions of this Newsletter are available at the Amigos website:

<https://www.amigosdelasevilleta.org/contacts>