



ERIOGONUM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Eriogonum Society Formed

A new society has been formed by a few eriogonum enthusiasts who love to grow these plants in our gardens and view and photograph them in their native habitat. The idea is that by other like minded people joining together we can all learn more and interest other people in these fascinating plants. The objectives of the Eriogonum Society are:

- enjoying and promoting the use of these plants in the garden.
- enjoying and evaluating eriogonums in the wild for their use in the garden.
- assembling, developing and sharing information on the propagation, cultivation, identification and distribution of the eriogonum species.
- providing a seed exchange to distribute eriogonum species seed for use in our gardens.
- protecting rare and endangered species of eriogonums.

To meet these objectives it is planned to have a website devoted to the society, an on-line newsletter published four to six times per year, annual trips including educational opportunities to view and learn more about eriogonums, access to an annual seed exchange and later an annual bulletin with articles of interest and nice photos.

One of our first objectives is to build a viable membership base. If you or any of your friends or acquaintances would be interested in joining please contact either Bob McFarlane or Hugh MacMillan whose addresses are shown at the end of this newsletter. Dues are \$10 US annually.

First Annual Meeting Scheduled for 2010

The first annual meeting of the Eriogonum Society will be held in the summer of 2010. The location will be determined by vote of the charter members of the society from one of four locations, (1) Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont, California including the nearby Coast Range, (2) Bishop, California and the Panamint/Eureka valleys, White Mountains and Sierra Nevada, (3) University of Nevada in Reno including the Sierra Nevada and high desert areas near Reno, and (4) Vernal, Utah and the Uintah Mountains and the White River-Bonanza area. A list of these sites is included on the application form and all new charter members from now until March 31, 2009 will have a vote.

Dr. James Reveal, the world's foremost authority on Eriogonums and our societies first Honorary Member, will be giving a 2 1/2 day course on understanding the history of Eriogonums and getting hands-on experience with identifying real plants at this inaugural meeting.. Included will be an introduction to morphology, terms, keys and examples of Eriogonum and relatives in addition to group field trips to specific areas to test our new knowledge. This will be an excellent opportunity for many of us to increase our knowledge about this wonderful plant family.



Some information on Eriogonums

According to some experts the name Eriogonum comes from the Greek where "erion" means wool and "gony" means knee which alludes to the hairy nodes of the species first described, *E. tomentosum*. The plants are sometimes known as wild buckwheat and the genus as currently defined is entirely confined to North America. There are some 250 species of Eriogonum, making it, along with Penstemon and Astragalus the largest groups of plants in North America. The species are particularly numerous in the Western United States.

Species habitats range from the off-shore islands of California to the East Coast and from central Alaska and the Yukon to central Mexico. Many of the species have long been known to be difficult to identify but many are common in our gardens. Dr. Reveal has published an interesting article on, "Eriogonum as a Rock Garden Plant", (University of Maryland, posted on the internet on 28 Sept. 2003) in which he describes the

relationships between the various classifications of Eriogonum and its near relatives. He also examines over 150 species and varieties for their garden worthiness. You can find and download this paper by googling on "Eriogonum" and "Reveal".

Another good reference is in the chapter on Eriogonum in Graham Nicholls book, "Alpine Plants of North America" (Timber Press, Portland, Oregon: 2002). This treatment contains good information on the garden worthiness of many species and includes useful information on propagation and cultivation as well as many very nice photographs.

We hope that by joining together, learning more about these plants, and sharing our information that we can grow in our appreciation of them both in their native habitat and in our gardens and be able to spread this knowledge to others.

Eriogonum Website under Development

The Eriogonum Society website is being developed and managed by Hugh MacMillan. It can be found at www.eriogonum.org. While still in its infancy the site is planned to contain important information on propagating, cultivating, identifying, and locating eriogonum plants as well as updated information of society activities and events. Please take a look and tell Hugh your thoughts on how it should look and what it should contain. A good logo would be helpful.

Contacts

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APPLICATION FORM

Name_____

Address_____

E-mail Address_____

Phone_____

Vote for Location of First Annual Meeting (Select one)

- ☐ **Rancho Santa Ana, CA**
- ☐ **Bishop, CA**
- ☐ **Reno, NV**
- ☐ **Vernal, UT**

Please send annual dues (January 1 thru December 31) of \$10. to Bob McFarlane at 5609 S. Locust St., Greenwood Village, CO 80111.