



Arizona Section Newsletter

OCTOBER 2015



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President's Message:

First – great news! - Tropical Depression Sixteen-E is bringing moisture into the Southwest, producing heavy rain and strong thunderstorms as I write. I hope there are no dry Section members.



Thank you to all who helped to make the Summer Section meeting focusing on the many uses of public rangelands a success. President-Elect Chris Thiel organized a variety of speakers with expertise in a wide range of topics including grazing systems, invasive species, wildlife habitat, pronghorn status and distribution, burning and restoration, and prehistoric cultures. Much of the meeting was held in the field where we had a chance to visit the West Bear/Del Rio Allotment for a great discussion of short-duration grazing with ranch managers Don and Rueben Verner, and a visit to the Sand Flat Allotment used during the dormant-season, followed by lunch at the Perkinsville Bridge and the Verde River. At the lunch break we heard from the manager of the Perkinsville Allotment, Danny Major. The meeting would not have been possible without the help and participation of the Prescott National Forest, the Verde Watershed Restoration Coalition, the AZ Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Land Management, and the University of Arizona. Thank you.

Congratulations to Chris Bernau for winning the plant ID contest! Thank you Kelsey Hawkes for organizing the contest. Excellent breakfasts were provided by the ASU and UA student members, and they also deserve a big thank you.

Although the temperatures in Tucson seem far from yielding, our Winter Section meeting is fast approaching. The meeting will be held in Yuma this year. President-Elect Chris Thiel, and Ashley and John Hall are putting together an exciting program focusing on the Colorado

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WINTER MEETING

The date for the winter meeting of the Arizona Section will be January 7th and 8th (Thursday-Friday) in Yuma, AZ. The theme of the meeting will be Colorado River management. We are considering two hotels that could accommodate our group, and will have an email notification to the Section once this is finalized. Topics that we would like to cover include riparian restoration projects, wild horse and burro management, and historical aspects of the area. We are hoping to take advantage of the fine winter weather in Yuma and have some outdoor field visits during the meeting. As always, we will have our annual banquet on Thursday evening that will include the presentation of Section awards. Please mark your calendars and save the date to come to sunny Yuma for a winter break!

Board of Directors*President**Mary Nichols**Mary.nichols@ars.usda.gov**President-Elect**Christine Thiel**cathiel@fs.fed.us**Past President**Willie Sommers**wsommers@azland.gov**Vice President**James Heitholt**jheitholt@fs.fed.us**Secretary/Treasurer**Ashley Shepherd**AshleyS3@email.arizona.edu**Director North**Joelle Acton**jwalker6@email.arizona.edu**Director North**Chris Bernau**cbernau@email.arizona.edu**Director South**John Hall**jahall@blm.gov**Director South**Kelsey Hawkes**khawkes@email.arizona.edu**U of A Student President**Leland Sutter**lelandsutter@email.arizona.edu**ASU Student President**Jacquie Evans**Jacquelyn.Evans@asu.edu***President's Message...continued**

River. Save the dates: January 7 and 8, and see more information from Chris on Page 1.

Winter is also Section election time. Please consider throwing your hat into the ring for an Arizona Section leadership position. If you are willing to serve and lead the Section for the next 2-4 years, please contact any one of the Section officers listed in this newsletter. We encourage anyone who has not served to consider this fun and rewarding opportunity. Don't forget - positions can be filled by those who have served previously, so if you have been wishing for a do-over, now is your chance. Remember - as an all-volunteer organization, AZSRM relies on volunteers!

Lastly, a brief update on the Section tax-exempt status - we continue to wait in radio silence. Past-President Willie Sommers is continuing to try to bring this issue to resolution.

Mary Nichols

Don't forget about our Arizona Section Website!

Have you ever wondered what the board of Directors has been up to between our general meeting? Have you ever wondered how to get in contact with a member of the board, but don't have their contact information?



You can find all that and more at <http://azrangelands.org/>

Our website has copies of the recent meeting minutes from our Board of Director meetings, a contact list of all of the members of the board, copies of our recent newsletters, and much, much more! Check it out!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**July**

Kelly Bergin Glendale, AZ

August

Colt Knight Tucson, AZ
Emily Lent Pineville, OR

September

Justin Gibson Kerrville, TX



Tierra Seca

Hello Members and Friends of the AZ Section of SRM,

My name is Leland Sutter, this year's President of the University of Arizona student chapter of the SRM, Tierra Seca. I am excited to have been entrusted to lead our fine club through yet another exciting and productive year. School is in full swing here at the University of Arizona, and our club is swinging along with the heavy workload.

Starting off, five of our members, including myself, attended the AZ section summer meeting. I know that I can speak for everyone in attendance about how great of a learning experience it was. Summer meetings are always a blast and our members appreciate the work that the section puts in for us.

Looking ahead in to the semester, we are expected to work at the V Bar V ranch for three weekends doing range monitoring work for Doug Tolleson. He has graciously agreed to employ us in exchange for funds to help our team attend the national SRM meeting in February. In addition to working with Doug, we also have a date set up to work with Mary Miller of the Elk Horn ranch doing vegetation monitoring.

That's not even all! The RISE symposium is just around the corner, members are working on a collaborative farming project, URME is in full swing, we're busy volunteering, and everyone is still making time to work in various internships. Jennifer is our URME team captain and she is working hard with Dr. Howery to make sure we have the best team we can have.

In addition to myself, our executive team includes:

Rachel Turner - Vice President
Joey Dahms – Treasurer
Morgan Gourley – Secretary
Dr. Mitch McClaran - Advisor

I am looking forward to a great year and I can't wait to see what we can accomplish as an awesome team!

-Leland Sutter
lelandsutter@email.arizona.edu



Director South Report

Range Nerds Go Neck and Neck in a Competition to Identify Plants at the Summer Meeting

By Kelsey Hawkes, Director South

At the Summer Meeting this year in Prescott, seven competitors embarked on a quest to identify 25 live and pressed herbarium plant specimens that exist in familiar range ecosystems of Arizona and North America. The Lynx Lake Campground on the Prescott National Forest served as the arena for this summer's challenge. Plant species varied from grasses, forbs, shrubs, trees, native, introduced, common, to uncommon, and in some cases, the competitors had to identify a species based only on a small distinct anatomical part of the plant (see below). Many of the plants could be found right there in the rangelands of the Prescott area, and included such species as shrub live (turbinella) oak, hairy grama, orchardgrass, dalmation toadflax, and pointleaf manzanita. Some species were more difficult to identify than others, which helped ramp up the competition and allow one winner to rise above the other competitors. It was a very close race this year with only 3 points separating first and second place winners in a point-system where correctly identifying the family, genus and species, common name, origin, and longevity of a single species will earn you 10 points.

Our second place winner was Doug Whitbeck, Rangeland Management Specialist for the Bureau of Land Management in Phoenix, who took home a LED illuminated hand lens prize. And our first place winner was Christopher Bernau, Rangeland Research Specialist for the University of Arizona V Bar V Ranch. Chris received the grand prize AZ SRM Plant ID Contest Winner trophy belt buckle, which has been a tradition for our summer meetings since 2011. Big congratulations to Chris and Doug, and an even bigger thank you to all of those people who participated and made this contest worth the effort.

This contest was originally designed with undergraduate students in mind to offer them a small practice competition in preparation for the official Plant Identification Contest held at the annual Society for Range Management conferences. However, I want to remind you that our Section competition is not limited to students, and we highly encourage anybody to join in on the fun. The more participants, the better.

We will be holding another small plant ID contest at our 2016 AZ Section winter meeting in Yuma. Because the annual conference in Corpus Christi will be right around the corner, this time we will only select plants that are used in the annual Plant ID Contest (from North American Wildland Plants: A Field Guide, by Stubbendieck et al). But beware! Many of the plants in our contest may be specifically found in the Yuma area, as opposed to other rangelands of North America. This set up will hopefully give students a chance to test themselves with a smaller selection of plants before the big contest, and also allow both students and other competitors an opportunity to learn more about the rangelands of southwestern Arizona and surrounding the Colorado River.

Looking forward to seeing everyone there!



More from the Plant Identification Contest at the Summer Meeting:

Can you identify these native Arizona species that our contestants had to identify?



a)



b)



c)



d)

Answers: a) *Larrea tridentata*; b) *Digitaria californica*; c) *Prosopis glandulosa*; d) *Pinus ponderosa*

SUMMER MEETING

Chris Thiel, Donnie Verner and Reuben Verner lead a prescribed grazing discussion at the Bar Heart Ranch.

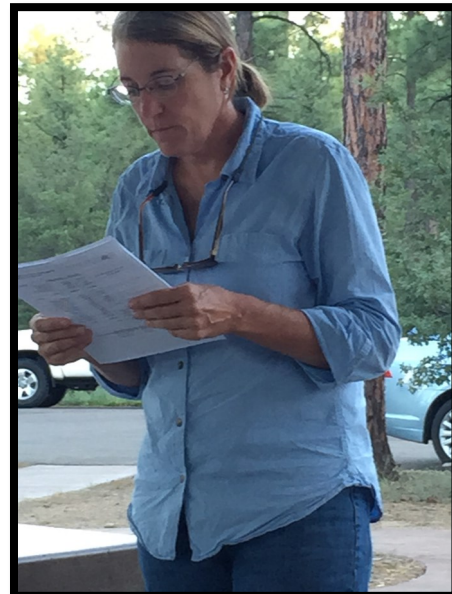


SUMMER MEETING

Noel Fletcher and Danny Major discuss wildlife management on the Verde River and juniper encroachment into grasslands.



Members enjoying a meal from Bopper Chuckwagon Cooking and presentations on prescribed fire and conservation partnerships from the USFS and AZGFD.



Calendar of Events

- October 17 12th RISE Symposium (Research Insights in Semiarid Ecosystems) Marley Building, Room 230, University of Arizona. The annual RISE symposium features recent research at the USDA-ARS Walnut Gulch Experimental Watershed (WGEW) and the University of Arizona Santa Rita Experimental Range (SRER) and the Region. Registration and more information is available at <http://www.tucson.ars.ag.gov/rise/>
- December 27 - Jan 1 Arizona National Livestock Show, Phoenix
- January 7 - 8, 2016 Arizona Section SRM Meeting Yuma
- January 31 - February 4 SRM Annual Meeting, Corpus Christi, Texas



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 Range Management
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