



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

May 2007

CHAPTER EVENTS

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, May 15, 7:15 p.m.

Plant Communities of Point Lobos: Beyond Wildflowers with Rosemary Donlon, Point Lobos Docent

Point Lobos is comprised of rich and diverse plant communities, some quite rare and found in few other places on earth. Rosemary's program is a virtual walk through these communities from Northern Coastal Prairie in Hudson Meadow, through Monterey Pine forest, Monterey Cypress, Northern Coastal Scrub, Coastal Bluff vegetation and into the intertidal zones. Characteristics of these communities and their components, as well as the interdependence of species within these communities, will be discussed and illustrated.

Rosemary Foster is a long-time member, past president, and current Chapter Council representative of the Monterey Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society and has been a Point Lobos docent for 19 years. She studied horticulture and botany at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo in the 1980's. For the past twenty years, she has been researching the life and works of Lester Rowntree. UC Press recently published her 720-entry bibliography of Rowntree's published periodical articles in a reprint of Rowntree's *Hardy Californians*.

Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook Avenue.
(South of Ashlan Avenue), Fresno.

Centerville School Presentation. At 7:00 p.m. fourth graders from Centerville School will present their science project concerning water quality at China Creek. They gathered some substantive data on the park that is right in their back yard.

Future Meeting Programs

June-July-August No meetings during the summer months.

Beginning in September we will be meeting at a new location. Watch your September newsletter for details.

Sept. 18 "Future of National Parks & Wilderness in the 21st Century with William Tweed, PhD., Retired Chief of Interpretation for the National Parks Service

Oct. 16 "Edison Forest Management" with Terry Sandridge, Nursery Program Manager

Nov. 20 "Inventory and Monitoring in the Sierran Parks" with Meryl Rose

China Creek Workday

By Warren Shaw

On Saturday, April 21, a small but determined group of chapter members, friends, and park neighbors met to begin the laborious process of spreading the enormous pile of wood chips (accumulated through the fall and winter from Provo) on our interpretive trail. We do this in an attempt to keep weeds down without chemicals and provide a walkable surface.



Hannah Nadel, Ingrid Carmean, Thelma Valdez, and Hank Urbach wrap up the unloading of a BIG trailer of chips!

Thelma Valdez brought homemade tortillas and burrito fillings so we had a great lunch. Vulcan Materials and neighbor Sandy McNab provided power equipment for loading and moving chips, saving us a lot of work (but there was still plenty to do).

Though the day was cool and breezy, we all managed to perspire a good deal (some said they would skip the gym for a day or two). We made a good start on the process but there is more to do. Consequently we will meet again on Sunday, May 20 to continue.

There will be coffee and muffins for a mid-morning break, and Thelma promises more burrito makings for lunch (attendees are welcome to contribute other things to the potluck). Thelma plans to start at 7:00. You are welcome to join us at any time for any part of the day you can spare. We'll probably run out of steam by 3:00.

Bring the usual: hat, gloves, water, sunscreen, rakes, pitchforks. If you need help finding the park (or finding us), call 281-8080. It should be a great day to spend at the park. Sure hope to see you there.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Earth Day always sparks a renewed passion in me for the environment. Earth Day was conceived at a time when our nation was troubled with war and civil rights. It was a time of unrest and social change. Society was awakening to a new way of thinking, or so we thought. But was being an environmentalist in the 60's and 70's really that progressive?

Earth Day was created to honor John Muir and to reflect on the enormous privilege of the mountains, forests, rivers, and wilderness we share with the creatures of the earth and sky. He worked tirelessly to preserve the wild places he loved and wanted others to experience. The same challenges that John Muir faced as an environmentalist challenge us today.

The California Native Plant Society rose out of the 60's awakening to become a very strong and dedicated group of stewards for California's rich floral diversity. The CNPS mission statement is as important today as it was at its conception.

"The mission of the California Native Plant Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to conserve them and their natural habitats through education, science, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship."

It is our job to see that the mission statement is validated through our actions and dedication. As John Muir said, "The wrongs done to trees, wrongs of every sort, are done in the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, for when the light comes, the heart of the people is always right." It's our mission to offer the "light" to our fellow man.

- Peggy Jones

Conservation Update

By Jeanne Larson

I have received a lot of e-mail from CNPS state officers regarding regulations for clearing flammable dry growth around homes. One suggestion says that Ceanothus is not a fire carrier and that in the area from the 30-ft. clearance to 100 ft that these shrubs can be left to hold the soil. (That should please the deer also.) There are also indications that further clearance may be recommended. Remember the open areas that used to be grazed provided some fire protection. It may be that in the future it will be necessary to have rain catchment tanks that can provide water for grazing animals hired to clear the outer areas of foothill home sites.

FYI - Lowlanders think that these late rains are great in that it will slow drying of foothill forage. However, in a dry year the forbs and grasses have already matured and will grow no more. A short rainfall year and drying winds spell hard time for cattle ranchers who rely on the green grazing season to fatten the calves. Further, late rains tend to leach nutrients from the forage crop so you may see an increase in beef prices at the market..

Endangered Species Day is May 18, 2007

On May 1, the U.S. Senate unanimously adopted a resolution sponsored by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) declaring May 18, 2007 "Endangered Species Day". By doing this, the U.S. Senate "encourages the people of the United States to become educated about and aware of threats to species success stories in species recovery and the opportunity to promote species conservation worldwide."

OBSERVATIONS

In the foothills around the Shaws' home, annual grasses are beginning to brown, though late rains have delayed the process. A surprising number of flowering plants are still blooming, including some early species like Baby Blue Eyes and Red Maids. And there are some impressive masses of Farewell-to-Spring on various hillsides and roadcuts. They have found at least three species of Clarkia on a morning walk early this past week. At lower elevations Buckeyes are in full spectacular bloom; while theirs, at 2000 feet, are just beginning to open.

Out in Kingsburg, Peggy Jones says that everything in her garden seems to be in bloom! Wild Rose, sages, buckwheat, penstemons, even the desert willows! The hummingbirds and carpenter bees love the sage! She still has goldfinches and they like hanging out in the Desert Willow.

Behind most lovers of plants, and especially native plants, is a love of life in general - birds, insects, mammals. On a hike we inspect the blossoms for more than just their beauty. We look for insects. Native plant gardeners become excited when they see native bees and wasps on our carefully planted buckwheat. And though it's wonderful to watch hummingbirds up close as they frequent a feeder, it's a special sight to watch them getting nectar from (not very red) Cleveland Sage or Harvest Brodiaea, or getting protein (insects) or spider silk from a web established in the leaves.

In the wild it is important to maintain not only federally recognized endangered species but also the web of life that supports them. So although the CNPS' emphasis is on plants, it's really about life.

The use of native plants in the landscape is about more than just plants. It's about habitat, from the fungi in the soil that we don't see, to the migrant bird species that we feel honored to have passing through our area, to the butterflies, beetles, and other beneficial insects that handle the small stuff. Homeowners can play a big role in providing corridors to help native animals thrive. Read about one woman's awakening on this subject. Janet Marinelli is director of publishing at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. Her article can be found at <http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?issueID=104&articleID=1312>

The National Wildlife Federation has a Backyard Wildlife Habitat program that allows you to certify your native landscape as a haven for wildlife. You can obtain planning information and the certification application by visiting www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat.

I thoroughly enjoy the migrant birds but it's the year-round residents that I'm most fond of. They're like family - the scrub jays, mockingbirds, doves, finches, crows, hawks, and sparrows. Because they're here year-round you get to know their seasonal antics, their food preferences, and appreciate their beauty. Who needs bright colors when you see a handsome feather pattern made up of only gray, white, black, and brown (and a little scrub jay blue)!

- Editor

RELATED PLANT AND FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES

Chawanakee Unified School District Adult Education Classes

Some classes may not be held due to low enrollment. It is important to register early. Make checks payable to Chawanakee Unified School District. Call Doug Waltner 683-0808 or Joanne Freemire at 877.4911 or 683-0808 if you have any questions.

Saturday
May 26th
1 - 4 pm
Fee: \$10

Waterfall Walk with Joanne Freemire
Carpool uphill for a 3 mile downhill hike over uneven terrain along Willow Creek to view Angel's Falls and Devil's Slide. Dress in layers. Pack snack, water, camera and hiking stick. Meet at Falls Picnic Area at North end of Bass Lake.

Saturday
June 23
1-4 pm
Fee: \$10

Chilkoot Lake Hike with Joanne Freemire.
Enjoy an easy two mile roundtrip walk to a High Sierra gem set among granite domes. We'll also see many flowered fawn lily, which grows only in Madera County. Dress in layers. Pack snack, water and camera. Meet at the upper parking lot of Bass Lake's Pines Resort.

Saturday
July 21
9 am-5 pm
Fee: \$20

Botanizing the Scenic Byway with Joanne Freemire. Carpool or caravan 50 miles to High Sierra meadows, falls, and viewpoints. Dress in layers. Wear shoes that can get wet. Pack lunch, water, insect repellent and camera. Prior purchase of Sierra National Forest map at USFS Station is recommended. Meet at North Fork Elementary School with a full tank of gas.



Jane Pritchard, Jim Seay, Chewie, and Joanne Freemire taking a break along the Horseshoe Bend Trail. Flowers were surprisingly plentiful and varied.

Intermountain Nursery

Saturday
June 2
9am - 2 pm

Grand Bluff Forest Tour with Bonnie Bladen & Ray Laclergue. Hike and tour this Watershed and forest restoration project. This will be a mildly strenuous hike for 3-4 hours. Some wildflowers will be blooming. Bring a sack lunch and water. Wear hiking boots and long pants. Meet at the Dinkey Creek Road Park-N-Ride at 9 a.m. Fee: \$10

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Black Mountain Open House.

Sunday, May 13, 2007, 9am-5 pm

It's 1-1/2 miles from the parking area to the top of the mountain with an optional additional mile along the ridge. *Carpenteria californica* will be in bloom along with many other wildflowers, identified with signs along the trail.

Classes. Space is limited. Bring lunch and water for daytime classes. Visit www.sierrafoothill.org for more information, registration, and changes/additions or call 877-2362 or 855-3473.

Saturday
June 2

Wildflowers of the Nelder Grove of Giant Sequoias. With Joanna Clines, botanist. At 5600 feet, Nelder Grove is a cool, shady respite from the Valley heat. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. No Fee.

Introduction to the Salicaceae of California (Cottonwoods and Willows) Workshop with John Bair Saturday & Sunday, May 12 and 13

Amaze your friends! Impress your superiors! Identify Willows using only vegetative characters! Sponsored by UCSC Arboretum Native Plant Workshops. We will cover all native members of the genus *Populus* found in the state and almost all of the species of *Salix* in California. Almost 1/3 of all North American willow species can be found in California. (Be forewarned- John Bair's enthusiastic appreciation of Willows may be infectious!) \$100. To register, contact Brett Hall brett@ucsc.edu or (831) 427-2998.

California Native Grass Association 2007 Workshops

Visit www.cnga.org for registration details on all workshops.

Using Native Grasses and Graminoids in the Urban Landscape
Thursday, May 17. Lecture and field instruction. Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens.

Using Native Grasses and Graminoids in the Urban Landscape
Sacramento location TBA.

Using Native Grasses and Graminoids in Restoration and Revegetation: Short Course. Fast-paced review of principal elements. Lecture and field instruction. Includes full workshop binder.

Jepson Herbarium Weekend Workshops

Visit <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops> for details

Mimulus. Friday - Sunday, June 1-3, with Steve Schoenig. Sequoia/Kings Canyon National Parks. California is the center of *Mimulus* diversity, especially rich in the central and southern Sierra Nevada. The workshop focuses on *Mimulus* evolution, ecology, and conservation while visiting some beautiful monkey flower hotspots. A draft of text and pictures from an upcoming book on California *Mimulus* will be distributed.

Flora of the Panamint Mountains. Wednesday - Saturday, June 20-23 with Dana York. Death Valley National Park. The workshop introduces participants to the flora and geology of the region while exploring the upper Panamint Mountains. Emphasis will be given to several endemic and rare taxa.

Easy-to-Grow California Native Plants for the Garden

By Joseph Oldham

With spring in full bloom, it's easy to ponder new plants to add to the garden. While spring is not the optimum time for planting California native plants, it is a good time to plant some of the easier-to-grow natives that are garden tolerant. I have had personal experience with all of the plants listed below, growing in Fresno and in the foothills. They are very adaptable and beautiful additions to any garden.

Cleveland Sage (*Salvia clevelandii*)

This is easily my favorite native shrub. A fast growing evergreen that can reach over 5 feet in height and 8 feet in width, this easy-to-grow native has it all. It is beautiful in bloom and out, a great wildlife plant, and adds an incredibly wonderful fragrance to your yard all year round. Add to its attributes that it is drought tolerant and not tasty for deer and gophers and you have about the easiest native to grow for the beginner. My first Cleveland Sage was purchased as a 1 gallon plant when we lived in Fresno and I planted it in the spring on a raised mound in heavy clay soil. It received drip irrigation once a week during the first summer and by fall it had reached over 3 feet in height and 3 feet in width. In two years it was over 5 feet tall, 6-7 feet wide, and covered in blue flower spikes all spring and summer.

Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)

Deer grass is a wonderful California native bunch grass that grows quickly and is tolerant of low water or regular garden water conditions. Deer grass has a main body of leaves that reaches about 2 ½ to 3 feet in height, but it puts out flower/seed spikes that can reach almost 6 feet in height on a mature plant. The foliage of Deer Grass is very soft and my children used to love to ride and walk between clumps of it that I had planted along the sidewalk at our house in Fresno. Deer Grass is not eaten by deer as one might think from the name, and I have even seen gophers leave it alone. Deer Grass will naturalize in your garden if conditions are to its liking and soon you will have many seedlings. These are not hard to control if you don't want them, but most people who have Deer Grass welcome them and soon have an area of their garden that becomes the "Deer Grass meadow".

"Dr Hurd" Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos manzanita*)

Manzanitas are one the "signature" plants of the California foothills, and with their striking foliage and smooth reddish trunks they are one the main plants people think of when they think of California natives. Many people do not realize that manzanitas can be grown in the garden, and the "Dr. Hurd" Manzanita is my favorite. This species of manzanita grows very large reaching about 15 feet in height when mature. It is also one of the most garden tolerant and adaptable species, and can be grown in Central Valley gardens as well as the foothills. "Dr. Hurd" Manzanita is not too picky about soil, but should be planted in a raised bed area or mound to improve drainage. Once a week watering is sufficient through the summer and irrigation water should be kept away from the crown of the trunk. "Dr Hurd" Manzanita has bell-shaped white flower clusters in late January and February, making it one of the earliest blooming plants in your garden and a welcome sight on a dreary fog-covered or cloudy day.

There are many other easy to grow California native plants, but the ones I have listed above were some of the first natives I had experience growing and continue to be my favorites. I have found that once people have a successful experience growing a few California native plants, they are hooked and will continue to experiment with other species. As more and more people look for ways to live in harmony with our environment instead of changing it, the more people are turning to the use of California native plants as the logical choice for our landscapes.

Happy planting!

Native Plant Garden Tour...Maybe

The Sequoia Chapter is considering a native plant garden tour in 2008. Initially we will start small, hoping each year to learn what works for the attendees and the organizers.

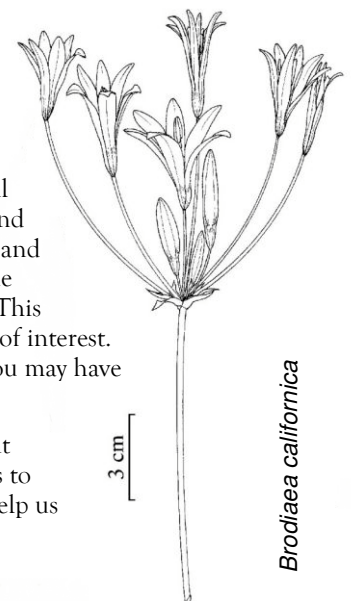
The tour for 2008 is still in the rough planning stages but we know we will restrict the 2008 tour to members only, no charge, and will have a limited number of reservations. It will probably take place in late April.

We are looking for gardens to feature that contain greater than 30% native plants, conserve water, and use no synthetic pesticides or fertilizer. If you have a potential garden or you know of someone who does, please e-mail Thelma Valdez at nmtv@att.net.

We don't know how many members would be interested in such a tour or which areas of our chapter have the greatest interest - in the City? Suburban rural? Foothills? Higher elevations?

If you think you might attend such a tour, please e-mail nmtv@att.net. We will place your name and e-mail address on an "early interest" list and you will be given early notification and an opportunity to reserve before the announcement in the newsletter. This helps us get a sense of the amount of interest. Any suggestions or cautions that you may have will also be appreciated.

We are also looking for native plant gardeners, speakers, and volunteers to be on this planning committee. Help us bring this to life!



MEMBERSHIP

The Sequoia chapter serves the Fresno, Madera, and Kings counties.

Thanks to all for your continuing support. Send membership corrections to Helen Shaw at helshaw@netptc.net.

NEWSLETTER



Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at nmtv@att.net. The deadline for contributions for the Summer newsletter is Saturday, June 30 2007.

This month's photomontage (electronic version only) includes photos from field trips taken in late April as well as photos from the homes and environs of various native plant gardeners. Look carefully and you will see insects in many of those photos.

If you wish to receive the newsletter electronically contact Helen Shaw, Membership Chair.

We would like to publish photos you wish to share. You remain sole owner and are given credit or you can remain anonymous, as you wish. Photos will not be used for any other purpose. E-mail Thelma Valdez with photos or questions at nmtv@att.net.

Project Budburst

Help scientists monitor climate change and climate impacts to plants. This spring, scientists are initiating a project to monitor climate change by collecting observations of the timing of flowering and leafing of trees and wildflowers by "citizen scientists" around the U.S.

This is the first year of a multi-year effort to chronicle plant responses to climate. The data will be used to estimate the rate and ecological impacts of climate change.

To learn more, to sign up as a participant, to see materials for kids in your home or in the classroom, or for information go to http://www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen_science/budburst/

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The IRS considers dues in excess of \$12.00 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible.

White Globe Lily (Calochortus albus)



JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY RENEW

Membership includes the quarterly CNPS journal, *Fremontia*; the quarterly *Bulletin* which gives statewide news and announcements of Society activities and conservation issues; and our chapter newsletter, *Carpenteria*.

I wish to affiliate with the Sequoia Chapter.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Make your check payable to "CNPS" and mail with this form to:

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California Native Plant Society
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The California Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in California's native plants. The mission of the Society is to increase understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and to preserve them in their natural habitat through scientific activities, education, science, and conservation.

CARPENTERIA

May 2007



CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

c/o Jeanne Larson • 3457 Redlands • Fresno, CA 93726

Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora.
For a membership brochure call Helen Shaw at 559/855-4519.
CNPS Web site: www.cnps.org.

FEATURED CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT

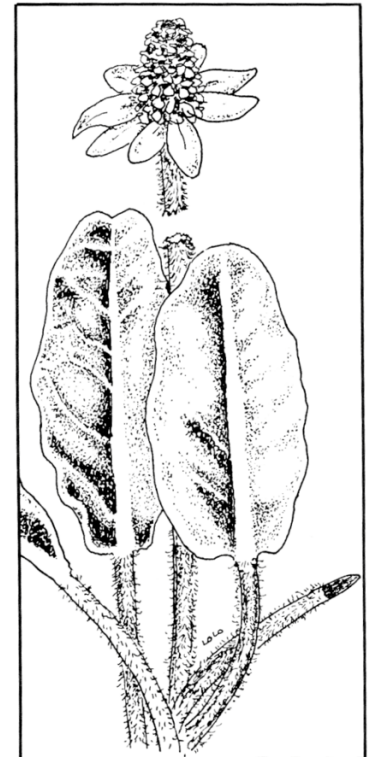
Yerba Mansa

Anemopsis californica. Lizard Tail. Chivnish. All of this plant's names have interesting sounds. The last is what the Cahuilla Indians called it.

The plant is common in lowland meadows and wet, alkaline places that are hot and sunny. The nearest location in our area to see Yerba Mansa is at China Creek in the next few weeks and through the end of May, perhaps some part of early June. It grows no taller than two feet with a cluster of many small flowers encircled by white bracts. The bracts look so much like petals that it appears to be a single cone-like flower instead of the complex arrangement of flowers that it is.

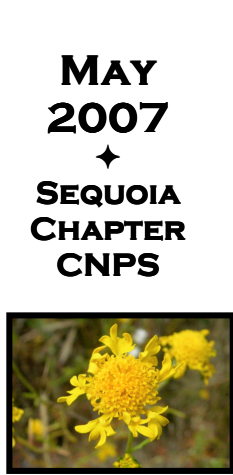
This is an Indian herb that was also quickly adopted by early Spanish settlers. Its leaves were used as a poultice to reduce swelling. A concoction of the roots was said to treat pleurisy, ulcers, colds, asthma, and chest congestion. It was known to help disinfect wounds and help the healing of lacerations in humans as well as horses, dogs, and other animals.

"Yerba Mansa was a true cure-all, a much respected herb that was widely used by Hispanic Californians well into this century, and is still a trusted remedy for a few loyal users."



Yerba Mansa

Source: *California Herbal Remedies* by LoLo Westrich.
Drawing by LoLo Westrich from the same book.



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PHOTO CREDITS
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