



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

October 2004

CHAPTER EVENTS

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, October 19. 7:00 p.m.

“Native Plant Gardening” with speakers Thelma Valdez and Joseph Oldham

Joseph lives in a new home development in Fresno. Thelma lives east of Clovis on a few acres of dry, “pre-foothill” flatlands. Both have been smitten by California native plants and have been incorporating and replacing their non-native landscaping for many years. Their presentation will demonstrate how California natives can be used in a wide range of home landscaping. They will discuss water use, plants used in their respective gardens, lessons learned, resources used, impact on local bird and insect populations, and techniques that have worked for them.

A beautiful slide presentation will accompany the talk, showcasing landscaping from a number of members’ gardens. Don’t miss this chance to see how California natives can work for you, presented by regular folks who can’t get enough of these beautiful and remarkable plants.

Regular meeting and speaker are at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue).

Future Meeting Programs

November 16 The Sequoia Monument
 Michael Kunz

December Happy Holidays!
 No meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend meetings and programs. Our meetings and programs are also open to the public and we encourage you to bring others that may be interested.



*Coffeeberry
(Rhamnus
californica)*

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



On September 24 Conservation Committee co-chair, Joseph Oldham and I attended a meeting of the Kings River Conservation District. The point of the meeting was to bring all the various types of King’s River water users -- residential, agricultural, and environmental -- together to discuss the future.

This is a really good idea. Mark Twain said, “In the West, whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting.” It’s true that various water users have been, are, and will be at each other’s throats in the courts and elsewhere. Given the enormous growth in population predicted for the Valley and the fact that water shortages are already being experienced in the mountains (e.g. Shaver Lake), the foothills (e.g. Oakhurst) and the valley (e.g. the Clovis area) it’s vital to work together to share water equitably.

Our principal concern here is to see that the environment gets its share without further destruction of natural habitat. However, native plants have an important role to play in the residential sector as well, especially those that have evolved and thrive in the valley and foothills because of their drought tolerance.

In a hot, dry climate like ours I don’t suppose we’ll ever completely get away from the appeal of a cool green lawn. However, we need to learn and help our neighbors understand that it is possible to create a beautiful and comfortable residential landscape that does not require expensive, troublesome, water-wasting sprinkler systems. It’s something we can do to help meet the looming water crisis ahead.

-- Warren Shaw

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Intermountain Nursery Class: Propagation of California Native Plants Saturday, October 18. 9:30 a.m.

Learn about the various propagation techniques for California native plants. Ray LaClergue will demonstrate and discuss collecting, storing, stratifying, and germinating seed. Also taking and rooting cuttings successfully and proper growing conditions for California natives. Handouts and information on books and supplies will be provided. A tour of the nursery's growing facilities will also be available. A \$5.00 non-refundable deposit will reserve your space for any one class. All classes are 2 hours except as noted. Call 559.855.3113 for more information.

Grazing Workshop Using Planned Grazing in the Management of Native Grasslands. Wednesday, November 3. 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Presented by the California Native Grass Association. The initial classroom portion will discuss planning a livestock grazing program that seeks to control annual invasive species while enhancing native perennial species. How to select an appropriate herbivore, timing of grazing and intensity of grazing, grazing system and tools needed for a successful grazing regime will be explored. Real life experiences, successful and less successful, will provide context. Following the classroom presentation, participants will travel to the Morris Family Ranch to continue instruction.

Memorial Center, 649 San Benito Street, Hollister, CA and Morris Ranch, San Juan Bautista, CA. \$125 for CNGA members; \$170 to non members. For more information, visit < www.cnga.org/documents/grazing-regform.pdf >

Sierra and Foothill Citizens Alliance October 26. 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

This association was formed by many of the residents of Tollhouse, Auberry, Prather, Mallard Meadows, Valerie Meadows, Cressman, Pine Ridge, Shaver Lake, Big Creek, and Huntington Lake communities regarding water conservation and sustainability issues facing the residents from these communities.

It is by far the largest grassroots organization to deal with related issues of the many eastern Fresno County foothill and mountain communities.

Water sustainability has become critical in some areas with wells going dry and surrounding developments putting increased demands on a FINITE and FRAGILE water system. All the areas already mentioned are on a Fractured Granite Aquifer as opposed to a more renewable Alluvial Aquifer.

The Alliance meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at the Sierra Oaks Senior Center, 33276 Lodge Road, Tollhouse . All interested parties are invited to attend. To learn more, visit < www.macy-1.net/sfca.html >

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Classes require reservations (\$10/person, \$20/family) unless otherwise noted. For more information and registration call 559/855-3473 or visit <www.sierrafoothill.org>. Hikes are free. Call for meeting points and weather information. Bring lunch & water for all daytime classes.

Hikes

Saturday November 27 9 am	Hikes at the McKenzie Preserve. (Free) This is the only fall hike. Walk the Discovery Trail (3.7 miles) or hike to the top of the table (moderate 6 miles) in the cool fall air. Bring lunch and water.
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Classes

Saturday October 30 9 am- 2 pm	Natural History of Sierra Foothill Birds. Join Jeff Davis, local ecologist and writer, to learn about the relationship of birds, acorns, berries, and oak trees at the McKenzie table Mountain Preserve.
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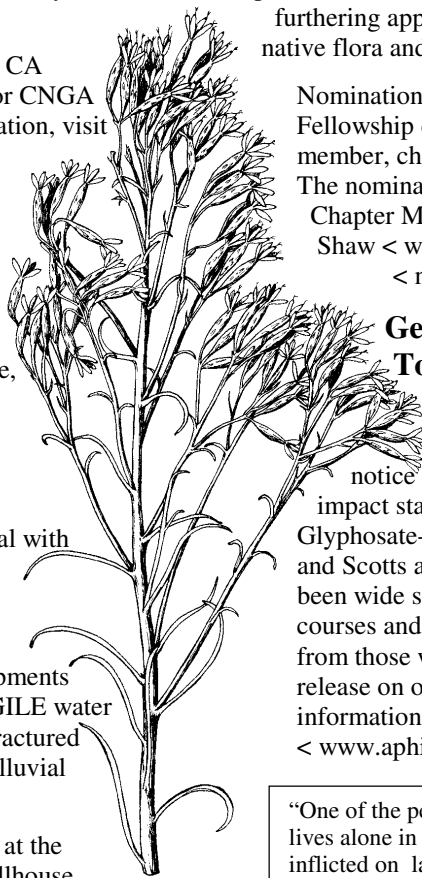
The CNPS Fellows Committee is asking for nominations of members for Fellows.

The naming of individuals as Fellows of the California Native Plant Society is a means of awarding special recognition to persons who have made an outstanding contribution to furthering appreciation and conservation of California native flora and to the success of the Society.

Nomination of any CNPS member in good standing for Fellowship can be made at any time by any CNPS member, chapter, board, committee or officer. The nomination form will be available at the next Chapter Meeting (October 19) or contact Warren Shaw < warshaw@netptc.net > or Thelma Valdez < nmtv@att.net > for a copy.

Genetically Engineered Glyphosate-Tolerant Creeping Bentgrass

On September 24, Animal and Plant Health inspection Service published a notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement concerning Genetically Engineered Glyphosate-Tolerant Creeping Bentgrass. Monsanto and Scotts are proposing unlimited use and there has been wide support among those who care for golf courses and city parks. There has been less response from those who are concerned about the impact of this release on other plans, including native grasses. For information, visit < www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor/brs.html >



Rabbitbrush (Chrysothamus spp.)
Illustration from A Manual of the Flowering
Plants of California by Willis Linn Jepson, 1925

“One of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds. Much of the damage inflicted on land is quite invisible to laymen. An ecologist must either harden his shell and make believe the consequences of science are none of his business, or he must be the doctor who sees the marks of death in a community that believes itself well and does not want to be told otherwise.”

-- Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac

WATER CONSERVATION

Water Conservation; a Life or Death Decision for Wildlife and People

By Joseph Oldham

This is an excerpt from an article written for the Yellowbill (Audubon Society newsletter).

We have recently become aware of water issues that are facing our region -- from private wells going dry in Clovis to water being trucked to Table Mountain casino. These events are unusual for Fresno, even in past dry years. Many are beginning to suspect that something is not right with our water supply and they are right.

My recent involvement with the new Upper Kings River Water Forum has uncovered very disturbing facts that lead me to the conclusion that we are running out of water in the San Joaquin Valley and not much is being done yet to stop it!

Groundwater pumping exceeds groundwater recharge; more water is drawn out than nature or man puts back. The City of Fresno pumps over 200,000,000 gallons of water per day during the summer months, but is only able to recharge about 100,000,000 gallons per day thru the waste water treatment plant and recharge basins.

State and local politicians continue to predict and plan for a doubling of the population in the San Joaquin Valley over the next 25 years; yet none of the publicly discussed plans detail how the groundwater supply will not be depleted.

So what can be done to stop the continuing depletion of our groundwater supply? The answers are complex scientifically and politically, but one of the most obvious is to stop using as much water.

- Consider lawn reduction or removal.
- Replace water-loving shrubs with drought tolerant California natives
- Replace conventional sprinkler systems with drip irrigation wherever possible
- Let your local, State, and Federal elected officials know that you are concerned and that past remedies such as dams and canals will not solve our groundwater issues.

Remember that we live with annual rainfall averaging about 10 inches. Ultimately, we are dependent on nature to provide us the essentials of life just as is every other species on the planet. It is only in how we use those essentials of life that we have any control.

OBSERVATIONS

After only a couple of weeks of recent cooler weather, some California natives that have lain low over the summer return to action in October. Just as we emerge from a hot summer to enjoy relatively cooler days and longer nights, these plants do the same. The action can be subtle, sometimes nothing more than a greening of blades at the base of the needlegrasses (*Nassella cernua*, *pulcra*, and *lepida*) or the gentle blossoming of Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*) and Alkalai Sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*).

Some activity is not so subtle -- Madeleine Mitchell's Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) is loaded with berries for the first time, and they're turning red, along with the rose hips on her native rose (*Rosa californica*). She will have Christmas colors in her front garden to share with the public

Of course those bastions of summer heat, Blue Curls (turpentine or vinegar weed), Tarweed (*Holocarpha heermannii*), Doveweed (*Eremocarpus setigerus*), and Tree Tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*) are often still the only signs of above ground life in the foothills. They too are beginning their wind down from the summer by producing large quantities of seed to do it again next year.

The deciduous foothill Blue Oaks (*Quercus douglasii*) are still a dusty green, gold, brown, or are defoliating, each on its own timetable. An unusual number are dying or breaking down, due perhaps, to drought. Nonetheless there is a fairly heavy acorn crop.

Other deciduous trees are beginning to wrap up their season, too. Sycamores are coloring and Desert Willow are scaling back the number of blossoms they produce as their seed pods prepare to break open and scatter.

The two Coffeeberry I planted last year have grown modestly and one has many small yellow blossoms that hold promise to produce the berries for which I planted them.

-- Editor

SEPTEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

Chuck Peck, executive director of the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, delivered a wealth of information in a short period of time. With information learned over many years, and slides to demonstrate, he explained how cattle grazing has been successfully used in the restoration of various land areas for many years.

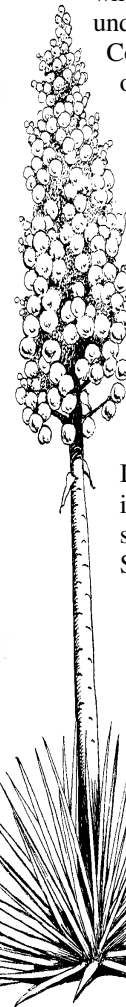
His own background includes an initial aversion to cattle grazing. Continued exposure and experience with the Sierra Foothill Conservancy has brought him to recognize that with judicious timing and careful planning, cattle can play an important role in returning native plants back to the land.

An especially important point is that we must preserve what we have now, and what we have now includes land under private ownership.

Conservation organizations cannot own or manage it all. Therefore, it is important to work with responsible cattlemen to understand and realize how land stewardship and cattle can be compatible.

The Sequoia Chapter is considering the use of cattle or other herbivores to aid in the elimination of Star Thistle at China Creek.

If you have knowledge or information that could help support this effort, contact Warren Shaw.



Our Lord's Candle
(*Yucca whipplei*)

Illustration from A Manual
of the Flowering
Plants of California
by Willis Linn Jepson, 1925

*Toitu he Kaainga, whatu ngarongara he tangata
The land still remains when the people have disappeared.*

-- Maori saying

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Emily B. Roberson < EmilyR@cnp.org >

Sign the Endangered Species Act Legacy Pledge!

Unfortunately, the Endangered Species Act, and the protections it provides for our nation's endangered fish, plants, and wildlife, has been under constant assault from both Congress and the Bush Administration in recent months and is facing its most serious threats in its 30 year history. For all those who support the protection of threatened and endangered species, the time for action is now. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to stand up against these attacks, so that they will enjoy the wildlife legacy with which we have been blessed.

Despite the fact that the Endangered Species Act has been one of the nation's bedrock environmental laws since 1973 and, according to a recent poll, 90 percent of U.S. voters recognize the importance of providing a safety net for wildlife, plants, and fish that are on the brink of extinction, the opponents of strong endangered species protections seem to be winning the messaging war. We know better, the American public supports a strong Endangered Species Act.

With this, Representative Dingell, an endangered species champion who helped write the original Endangered Species Act in 1973, has created an Endangered Species Act Legacy pledge. Conservation organizations are working to get thousands of concerned citizens across the country to sign this pledge and let the media and our elected officials know that we need to be good

stewards of the environment by protecting endangered species and the special places they call home.

When various threats arise to the Endangered Species Act, in the form of legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives or the Senate or negative administrative actions, the conservation community will be able to take the list of pledge supporters to members of Congress and let them know that their constituents support strong protections for our nation's endangered fish, plants and wildlife. Sign the pledge at:

< www.stopextinction.org/petitions/Petition.cfm?petitionID=8 >

43 Scientists Raise Concerns Regarding the Effect of Bush Administration Policies on California

43 scientists, ecologists, and conservation biologists delivered a letter to President Bush expressing concern about the Bush Administration's environmental policies in the State of California, their disregard for scientific principles, and their suppression of scientific information.

The letter was released in August. CNPS was a key organizer in that effort, in partnership with the Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife, the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, California Trout and other groups. A copy of the scientists' letter is available at:

www.defenders.org/california/04/letter.html

ANNUAL FALL PLANT SALE

Sequoia Chapter's 11th Annual Fall Plant Sale (there were a couple of Spring Sales in the distant past) was staffed with plenty of volunteers, Warren and Helen Shaw, Rose Rowe, Madeleine Mitchell, Kathy Boudinot-Johnson, Howard Latimer, Peggy Jones, Marian/Frank Orvis, Thelma Valdez, Joseph Oldham, Bonnie Bladen, Ray LeClergue, and new member Ingrid Carmean.

Pumpkin King Wayne let us set-up in front of his gate so we had a great display. The only thing lacking were customers. That seems strange since so much is being reported about lack of water and need to conserve. Our net was only \$526, but the yard sales earlier helped with income needed for outreach and restoration projects.

Since the sale I have received two calls wanting to know where to buy native plants, both from the Dunlap area. If anyone has ideas how we can reach the public your comments and ideas would be welcome.

--Jeanne Larson, Plant Sale Chair



"It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it's still here. So get out there...enjoy yourselves."

-- Edward Abbey



JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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: _____

- Student/Retired/Limited Income \$20
- Individual or Library \$35
- Family or Group \$45
- Supporting \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$250
- Benefactor \$500
- Bristlecone \$1000

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

California Native Plant Society
2707 K Street, Suite 1
Sacramento, CA 95816-5113

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.

SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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"Growing Native" is Back!

For 10 years Louise Lacey wrote a bi-monthly newsletter called "Growing Native". She discontinued writing the newsletter in early 2001. The newsletter was filled with lots of excellent information and inspiration surrounding California natives. You didn't have to be a gardener to appreciate this newsletter.

During this hiatus, Louise Lacey has been reorganizing ten years worth of 59 issues into different formats to make their information available at a significantly lower price.

Visit < www.growingnative.com > to obtain more information or to order. A taste of what is available includes: A combination of "The Basics of Growing California Native Plants," and "The Plant Communities of California", One hundred and seventy-five perennials, 115 for dry gardens, and 60 moist or wet, One hundred and fifty shrubs, about half evergreen and half deciduous.

'Edible Natives' Brochure

We are looking for personal experiences and recipes from individuals who enjoy eating wild native plants. Perhaps you nibble on Miner's Lettuce or use some of the many native herbs in cooking. Whatever your experience, email Thelma Valdez at < nmtv@att.net > with your thoughts. The goal is to produce a brochure of local edible plants.

Newsletter

Send newsletter contributions, corrections, or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at < nmtv@att.net >. The next newsletter will be the November issue. Contributions are due by Saturday, November 6. Got Observations?

CARPENTERIA

October 2004



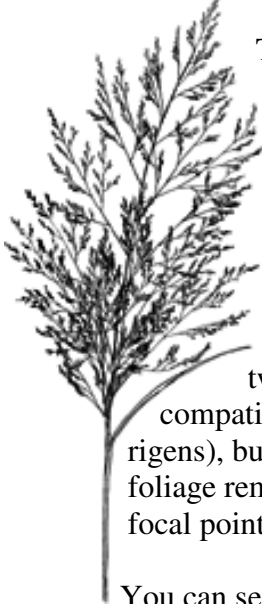
CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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 PLANT

Alkalai Sacaton



The botanical name of this grass is *Sporobolus airoides*. It is a very tough bunchgrass that produces delicate plumes at the end of summer.

It is native to both alkalai sinks and vernal moist valley bottoms. For the gardener, it is a showy two to three foot grass that is a compatible with Deer Grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*), but looks great on its own also. The foliage remains delicate and is a beautiful focal point throughout the winter.

You can see this grass in the alkalai meadow at the Kaweah Oaks Preserve in Tulare County (from the Road 182 parking lot, the first plant community encountered is the alkali meadow.) Visit

< www.kaweahoaks.com/html/urtecho.html > for more information on the Kaweah Oaks Preserve.

In April 2002, Students of the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) and from Central High School of Fresno worked to restore native grasses on the San Luis National Wildlife Refuge (about one hour south and west of Modesto on State Road 16). Alkalai sacaton figured highly in this restoration project and there are now contiguous blocks of alkali sacaton and saltgrass.

Although it looks best with occasional, or even regular irrigation, it is drought tolerant once established. The plumes are beautiful in dried arrangements.

"I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journeywork of the stars." --Walt Whitman