



# CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter  
California Native Plant Society

January 2006

## CHAPTER EVENTS

**Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, January 17, 7:00 p.m.**

***“The Status of Native Flora on the West side of the San Joaquin Valley”***

**Speaker: Nur Ritter, Restoration Botanist for the Endangered Species Recovery Program  
California State University, Stanislaus**

For a variety of reasons, it is essential that locally-collected seed be utilized in restoration efforts. However, the San Joaquin Valley has been subjected to a tremendous amount of development, and only 5% or so of the region remains relatively undisturbed.

For the past six years, we have been conducting restoration research on the Valley's retired agricultural lands. During that time, we have increasingly apportioned resources towards locating areas that support native plant species.

Concurrently, we have had to expand our concept of what constitutes a "local" source; and now include sites within a 50 mile radius. To date, we have located 41 upland collecting sites, ranging in size from a few hundred square feet to over 500 acres. In all, 156 native species have been encountered.

These species represent only a small fraction of those known historically for the area. More importantly, although few of these species would be considered rare on the state level, a significant number are clearly rare on the local level. Nearly two-thirds of the species were encountered in only 1-3 collecting areas. Furthermore, some species were represented by single individuals.

Despite limiting our collecting to upland habitats, approximately one-seventh of the species were either obligately or facultatively associated with wetlands; hence, their potential for upland restoration is uncertain.

Join us as Nur discusses the restoration efforts in this important program.

**Board meeting starts promptly at 6:00 pm. All members are welcome to attend the Board Meeting.**  
Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue). The public is welcome!

## China Creek Update & Workday

*By Warren Shaw*

Given the recent holidays and the current soggy state of the weather, progress at China Creek has slowed somewhat, but not stopped. Planning continues for repairing and building fences to allow grazing another section for weed abatement. John Buada has arranged for Vulcan Materials to provide some of the labor for this project. We're looking for sources of materials and additional labor.

Recently Conservation co-chair Joseph Oldham recently met with the Kings River Water District board to present our concerns about their procedures in maintaining the ditch at the east boundary of the park. (See his report later in this newsletter.)

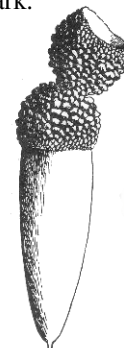
We've arranged for Bob Case, our April speaker to take a field trip to the park to advise us on dealing with our many and varied weed problems.

### **Next Workday**

The next workday will be Saturday, January 21 from 9-3. All are welcome. Weather permitting, we'll be laying out the fence and doing trail maintenance. Bring gloves, hat, water, lunch, rakes, shovels, shears, etc. Hope to see you there.

Take 180 East to Smith Road (West fence of Centerville School). Go south on Smith Road for about a mile (cross Rainbow Road) and drive to the pipe barrier/gate.

*(China Creek, an undeveloped Fresno County Park near Centerville on the Kings River, is a Sequoia Chapter restoration and educational project area.)*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I would like to devote my last message entirely to thanking those who keep the chapter functioning: the officers and committee chairs. I realize it's impractical, given the limitations of both space and my memory to try to list all of every person's contributions, but I feel I the need to highlight those who stand out in my mind. I apologize for the inevitable oversights.

- Paul Mitchell, Vice president -- For backing me up, managing the room and SHOWING UP, for workdays and events.
- Madeleine Mitchell, Hospitality Chair -- For making our chapter meetings congenial and social by seeing to it that coffee and goodies are always available, and helping with events and workdays.
- Marian Orvis, secretary -- for managing her stenographic duties so efficiently, and for all she does for the chapter and for the environment.
- Jeanne Larson, Treasurer for 30 something years of service to the chapter and the environment, and for inspiring the China Creek project.
- Joseph Oldham, Conservation co-chair -- For representing the chapter on a variety of conservation fronts, and working a variety of events as well.
- Thelma Valdez -- For editing and publishing extraordinarily informative and attractive newsletters, posters, and the China Creek brochure; working on the plant sale, outreach events, and park workdays.
- John Stebbins, Rare Plant chair [and coauthor of the definitive report on China Creek] -- For consulting on botanical matters.
- Joanna Clines, Programs and Field Trips chair -- For all the great programs she's brought us over the years, for the many enjoyable field trips she's led, and her contributions to the China Creek brochure.
- Howard Latimer, outgoing Horticulture chair --For substantial contributions to the brochure, and for being a stalwart docent and weed warrior at China Creek.
- Peggy Jones, Education chair -- For developing native plant curricula for local teachers, securing grants to help finance the China Creek project , demonstrating how the park can be used educationally with her own students, working with her son Morgan to start the nursery project, and, most of all, accepting the nomination for President!
- Helen Shaw, Membership co-chair and my longsuffering wife – For keeping that ever hanging membership mailing list up to date, handling mountains of communications for me, timekeeping board meetings , and in general, keeping me on track.

And, of course, many non-board members have made major contributions as well, and I wish there was space to name them all, but they know who they are, and I thank them too.

-- Warren Shaw



Saltbush  
(*Atriplex canescens*)

### Meeting with Kings River Water District

By Joseph Oldham

On December 22 I attended the board meeting for the Kings River Water District in Centerville. I was there to express the chapter concerns about the indiscriminate spraying of "Roundup" herbicide along the water channel on the east edge of China Creek Park and the subsequent dredging activities that left a huge pile of debris along the bank.

After introducing myself and explaining the chapter involvement with China Creek Park, I expressed our concerns about the spraying, dredging, and subsequent debris. They said the District intends to remove the debris later this winter and expressed their right to maintain the water channel. I did not disagree with that but expressed our disapproval of the use of Roundup where water could be contaminated and the damage that the herbicide had done to the downstream wetlands.

I informed them that Roundup is labeled as being toxic to aquatic invertebrates and that their activities had seriously damaged the downstream food chain in the wetland. I also informed them of research studies that showed Roundup to have serious toxic effects on vertebrate life forms such as fish, amphibians, birds, and that it has been linked to nervous system disorders in humans.

After some debate about the toxic effects of the herbicide, they agreed to contact us when they intend to do maintenance along the channel in the future. They said that their preferred way to clear the channel banks was by mechanical means and there was some discussion of the possibility of CNPS volunteers or county inmates assisting in that work.

The board thanked me for coming to them with our concerns. It is my hope that they will follow through with their commitment to notify us of their activities and if nothing else was accomplished, they know that interested people are watching them.

## HORTICULTURE

By Joseph Oldham

The rain storms that have recently blessed our area inspired the subject for this article. Each storm drops millions of gallons of water on our communities -- rainwater that should nourish our streams, lakes, underground water supply, and gardens. Unfortunately, much of that water runs off our man-made landscapes and flows through city streets where it picks up all manner of contaminants such as oil, grease, antifreeze, pesticides, etc. It ends up in drainage basins or canals. From these "flood control" basins the contaminated water travels underground through infiltration and ends up eventually in our drinking water supply under the Valley floor.



One way to help reduce the storm runoff contamination is through the use of rain gardens in your landscape. A rain garden is a shallow depression or basin planted with riparian native plants that collects rain water from the roof or other hardscape areas and allows the collected water to percolate underground. Rain gardens can be small or large, formal or wild looking. Any form provides a great benefit toward reducing storm water runoff. Rain gardens are also useful in controlling irrigation runoff in the summer. If properly located, a rain garden can channel sprinkler water back into your garden and reduce the amount of irrigation your plants may need over the summer.

Here in Yosemite Lakes Park I have developed several rain gardens in my landscape. Each one is designed to catch storm runoff from the roof and hold it so that the water nourishes the landscape and doesn't just run down the hillside and create erosion. The rain gardens are connected so that water from one garden runs to the next and so on. This approach mimics natural wetlands that are normally a series of basins of various sizes that fill progressively with storms and then dry up at different rates as the dry season progresses. Each of my rain gardens is planted with native perennial plants such as Creeping Wild Rye Grass, Willows, Fremont Cottonwood, California Wild Rose, and Cardinal Monkey Flower. Native annuals have also been planted, such as Clarkia, Lupines, and Fivespot. In the Valley where deer are not visitors, Blue-eyed Grass, Sedges, Mountain Asters, Pacific Iris, and Bigelow's Sneezeweed should thrive in your rain garden.

A clean water supply is an essential element for life and something that all of us must work to protect. Rain gardens are one way that the average gardener can make a difference in their community by conserving a precious resource and protecting it from toxic contamination. I encourage you to try building a rain garden and watch how it enhances your garden! For more information about rain gardens, search the Internet using the words "rain garden". There are hundreds of sites on the Web that talk about rain gardens with photos, design ideas, and planting recommendations. One caution about the planting recommendations is that most of the rain garden sites are located in the Midwest and the plants they recommend are natives to their location, not California. The plants that I have listed are California natives and I believe most California riparian plants will do fine in a rain garden.

Happy Planting!



## OBSERVATIONS

In the foothills grasses (mostly non-native) are growing rapidly. Recent winds and heavy rains have finished stripping deciduous trees. Warren Shaw says he thinks he saw the first little Blue Dick spears a couple of days ago.

California Poppies, Lupines, and other wildflower seedlings are about 1 to 2 inches in height. The mosses and lichen are brilliant green and all the Blue Oaks have lost their leaves.

One thing Joseph Oldham never noticed until he moved to the foothills is that during a rainstorm the bare, outer branch ends of Blue Oaks are burgundy in color. This is a striking contrast to the greens of the mistletoe, lichen, and mosses that inhabit the inner branches and trunks of the trees.

A species of gray leaved Manzanita is currently in full bloom in Yosemite Lakes Park. It's wonderful to see blossoms in December and January. Other Manzanitas are setting buds and should begin blooming soon.



The onset of foggy mornings has settled into the Valley lowlands. For those of us who love the quiet and peacefulness of time spent in the fog, this time of year is precious. The bare Valley Oaks seem their most majestic when seen emerging from the fog. Desert Willows have a beautiful twisting silhouette of that is obscured when in full bloom but delicate in winter

Having had such a mild winter thus far means that Harvest Brodiaea leaves are pushing up through the clay soil on open fields. In places they're so thick they look like deep green grasses until closeup inspection reveals what they really are.

Did someone mention grasses? Native needlegrasses look their greenest during these wet winter days when they sink their roots ever deeper into the soil (a.k.a. clay). Non-native grasses, too, are in abundance, as are Filaree.

Sages are pushing out lots of new growth. Walk downwind from a Cleveland Sage after it rains and ooohhh, what an incredible scent! A Wild Rose planted in November is already beginning to show the beginnings of new growth and there's already enough Miner's Lettuce to enjoy fresh from the earth and wet with dew or to toss into a green salad!

-- Edi tor

## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### Sierra Foothill Conservancy

**Hikes.** Hikes are free and begin at 9:00 a.m. Call to sign up and for meeting points and weather cancellations. Led by experienced volunteers. Bring lunch & water, hiking boots.

Saturday January 21	<b>Tivy Mountain to the Peak</b> 6 hr., 6 mi. strenuous cross-country hike.
Sunday January 22	<b>Table Mountain Discovery Trail.</b> 3 hr., easy 3.7 mi. hike.
Saturday January 28	<b>Table Mountain Table Top.</b> 5 hr., 6 mi. round trip, moderate hike, mostly on trail.
Sunday January 29	<b>Black Mountain Summit.</b> 3 hr., 4 mi. round trip moderate hike, along dirt road.
Saturday February 4	<b>Table Mountain Smith Basin.</b> 6 hr., 8 mi. strenuous round trip hike. (Table Top as a possibility)
Saturday February 11	<b>Black Mountain Summit.</b> 3 hr., 4 mi. round trip fairly easy hike, along dirt road.
Sunday February 12	<b>Table Mountain Table Top.</b> 5 hr., 6 mi. round trip, moderate hike, mostly on trail.
Saturday February 18	<b>Table mountain Archeological Site.</b>
Sunday February 19	<b>Table Mountain Discovery Trail.</b> 3 hr., easy 3.7 mi. hike.



### November 2005 Chapter Meeting

Way back in November members were treated to a wonderful presentation of the Grand Bluffs Demonstration Forest by Bonnie Bladen and Ray Laclergue of Intermountain Nursery. This private working forest is their 3-year old project of a lifetime. They shared the history and makeup of the area as well as their vision for its future. The demonstration forest is in the Kings River watershed and about 1/3 of the site is a true mixed conifer area, including Jeffrey Pine, Sugar Pine, and Scouler Willow. After a fire in 1947, Black Oak, Dogwoods, and a lot of Whitethorn Ceanothus are prominent.

Their ultimate goal is that of demonstrating forest management by following the model provided by indigenous peoples, in today's terms often called a whole-systems (or holistic) approach. The project is oriented toward a succession of plants that will eventually bring the area back into balance – a managed balance.

A great amount of work has already been accomplished in the past three years, and yet there is much to do. In a future newsletter look for a CNPS sponsored field trip to this unique project. For more information on this truly old (for some), yet new (for others) approach to forest management, visit their Web site:

< [www.intermountainnursery.com/grand\\_bluffs\\_demonstration\\_forest.htm](http://www.intermountainnursery.com/grand_bluffs_demonstration_forest.htm) >

#### **Elections for Sequoia Chapter Officers.**

Thank you to all who have already sent in your ballots. If you have not sent in your ballot (inside of last month's newsletter, please do so before Tuesday's meeting (Jan. 17). You can also bring your ballot to Tuesday's meeting. In either case, please take a minute to vote. Of course the slate of candidates makes it obvious who will be elected, but your participation is important to let the Officers and the Board know that you are out there, even if you are not able to attend meetings or be an active member.

### Jepson Herbarium Public Programs

Workshops are taught by recognized authorities in their field. Most workshops are designed to accommodate beginners as well as professionals. For a full schedule, descriptions, and registration, visit < <http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html> >.

Sun. February 25	<b>Tree of Life Series: Species Concept.</b> The species debate encompasses a variety of important issues in evolutionary biology. This one-day workshop introduces participants to the contentious realm of species! A number of interesting species-level case studies from current and ongoing research in the university and jepson Herbaria will also be presented.
Sat. & Sun. January 20-22	<b>Arctostaphylos.</b> With Tom Parker & Mike Vasey at the UC Hastings Reserve, Carmel Valley. Course fee includes meals and 2 nights of lodging.
Sat. & Sun. January 28-29	<b>Bryophytes.</b> With Brent D. Mishler & Ken Kellman at the Valley Life Sciences Building, UC Berkeley. This is the largest group of land plants except for the flowering plants and includes three distinct lineages: mosses, hornworts, and liverworts.
Sat. & Sun. February 4-5	<b>Bryaceae.</b> With John Spence at the Valley Life Sciences Building, UC Berkeley. This course will introduce students to the large moss family Bryaceae and its remarkable diversity.

### Moneyflowers are now in a new family

Yes, Monkeyflowers are now in their own family, the Phrymaceae (fry-MAY-see). There are over 80 species of monkeyflower that range from bright fuchsia to yellow to pink and combinations in between.

Some locally native monkeyflowers include the Bush Monkeyflower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*), Congdon's monkeyflower (*M. congdonii*), Yellow Monkeyflower (*M. guttatus*), Fremont's Monkeyflower (*M. fremontii*)



The Jepson Manual was published in 1993 and is now undergoing a total revision. The revised edition follows the new placements of plant families. Final text was due from all authors in December 2005 for a scheduled release in 2008.

Look ahead to spring's production of Monkeyflowers, and remember, they're now in their own family of Phrymaceae.

## NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

New members (December 2005). Welcome!! Marcoux

**Renewals:** Carmean, Glenn, Graber, Haffner, Meyer, Minton, Roberts, Smith & Peck, German

**Changed Chapters. Welcome!!** Koshear

Thanks to all for your continuing support. Send membership corrections to Helen Shaw at [helshaw@netptc.net](mailto:helshaw@netptc.net)

## NEWSLETTER

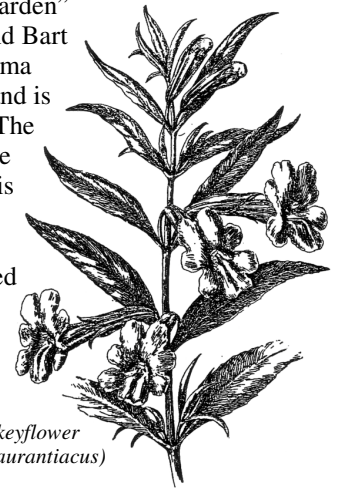


Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at < nmtv@att.net >. Contributions for the February newsletter are due by Friday, February 10.

Want your newsletter by e-mail instead of printed and mailed? If so, email Helen Shaw at [helshaw@netptc.net](mailto:helshaw@netptc.net).

## BOOK CORNER

“California Native Plants for the Garden” by Carol Bornstein, Dave Fross, and Bart O’Brian is a new book from Cachuma Press. It features over 500 plants and is illustrated with 450 color photos. The three authors are experienced native plant horticulturists (Bart O’Brien is director of horticulture for Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden in Claremont and was recently honored as Horticulturist of the Year by the Southern California Horticultural Society.)



Bush Monkeyflower  
(*Mimulus aurantiacus*)

## SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS\* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

<b>*President</b>	Warren Shaw 30400 Watts Valley Road Tollhouse, CA 93667	559/855-4519 (h) warshaw@netptc.net	<b>*Secretary &amp; Past President</b>	Marian Orvis 2427 E. Harvard Fresno, CA 93703	559/226-0145 mforvet@earthlink.net
<b>*Vice-President</b>	Paul Mitchell 580 W. Manning Ave Reedley, CA 93654	559/638-2784 (h) madpaul@cvip.net	<b>*Treasurer</b>	Jeanne Larson 3457 E. Redlands Fresno, CA 93726	559/243-0815 (h) jrjlars@aol.com
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<b>Field trips / Programs</b>	Joanna Clines 57003 Road 225 North Fork, CA 93643	559/877-2218 x3150 (w) jclines@fs.fed.us	<b>Education</b>	Peggy Jones 1931 Winter Street Kingsburg, CA 93631	559/897-9646 autumn_aspen@hotmail.com
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Thelma Valdez 12328 E. Sierra Ave. Clovis, CA 93619	559/323-8962 (h) nmtv@att.net	<b>Rare Plant</b>	John Stebbins 357 Adler Clovis, CA 93612	559/278-2179 (w) johnst@csufresno.edu
<b>Hospitality</b>	Madeleine Mitchell 580 W. Manning Reedley, CA 93654	559/638-2784 (h) madpaul@cvip.net	<b>Plant Sale</b>	Marian Orvis	(see Secretary)
			<b>Conservation Co-chairs</b>	Jeanne Larson Joseph Oldham	(see Treasurer) (see Horticulture)



## 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:

New Member

Renewing Member

- Limited Income .....\$20
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- Supporting .....\$75
- Plant Lover .....\$100
- Patron .....\$250
- Benefactor .....\$500
- Mariposa Lily .....\$1000

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.

# CARPENTERIA

January 2006



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](http://www.cnps.org) >**

## FEATURED PLANT

### Giant Sequoia

Our chapter is named the Sequoia Chapter because within our three counties (Madera, Fresno, Kings) we are privileged to be home to the largest acreage of groves of *Sequoiadendron giganteum*.

These trees maintain remarkable statistics: They can reach heights of 300 feet. They can live to 3000 years. They can weigh up to 2.7 million pounds. Their branches can reach 8 feet in diameter and the base of some trees reaches 40 feet in diameter. They are simply the largest living organism in the world in terms of volume. And yet their seeds are about the size of oat flakes.

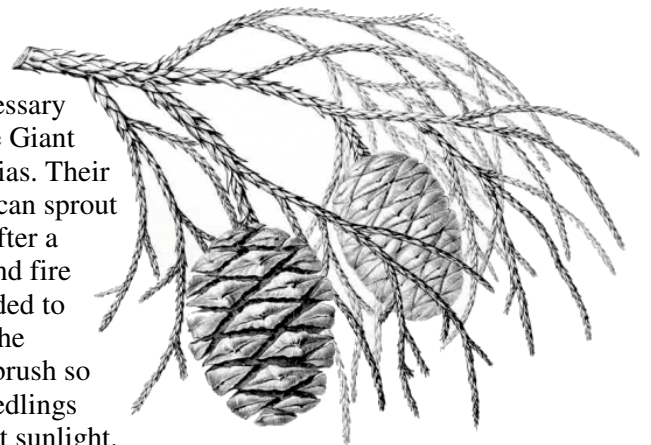


Giant Sequoias are a good landscape tree and tolerate a greater range of altitude and temperature than the Coast Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*). Certainly they are far more drought tolerant than Coast Redwoods.

Fire is necessary for the Giant Sequoias. Their seeds can sprout only after a fire, and fire is needed to clear the underbrush so the seedlings can get sunlight.

The bark of the trees is nearly fireproof and only the hottest blaze can hurt it.

This month we honor the gentle giant whose name graces our chapter.



Drawing of cones from *The Silva of North America*, Charles Sprague Sargent, Vol.X, Liliaceae-Coniferae, New York, Peter Smith, 1947, Plate DXXXVI.