

# Carpenteria

CNPS SEQUOIA CHAPTER



April 2016  
www.cnps-sequoia.org

## GARDEN NOTES

### --*Thelma Valdez*

In the last couple of weeks of March there was a neck-in-neck race between the growth of California natives and invasive grasses and other non-native species. My two 4-year-old garden plantings of whiteleaf manzanita have more growth this year than ever. I want to tell them, "Be careful with your enthusiasm. The drought isn't really over!" But they probably know that. Older plantings of Manzanita had good blooms in February and their little apples are getting a little bigger while they also send out new growth. Redbud and ceanothus are also finished blooming and settling into their next phase.



Various Cleveland sage varieties are just now starting to bloom while black sage is wrapping up its bloom cycle. The needlegrasses are showy as ever, hitting their peak bloom right now (about April 1 this year). Photos cannot do justice to the view while standing in the middle of the gently waving awns of California's state grass (purple needlegrass) and other needlegrasses.



-Cleveland Sage- ©2013 Keir Morse

My 9-year old woolly bluecurls is going strong and starting to impress pollinators with its blossoms. A new woolly bluecurls purchased and planted after the 2015 CNPS & Clovis Botanical Garden plant sale is doing well, tolerating a healthy California Poppy that likes the same space. All in all, a busy spring for humans, birds, insects, and beautiful (and fast!) western fence lizards.

-Woolly blue curls-  
©2009 Thomas Stoughton



-Ceanothus 'frosty blue'-  
laspilitas.com (Las Pilitas Nursery)

### --*Jeanne Larson*

The bee bliss sage blossoms still look pretty good, but the bees have moved to the *Ceanothus* 'frosty blue', a gorgeous blue-violet ball of color, eight feet in diameter, the fragrance of which is almost overpowering. The Pacific Coast hybrid iris is blooming. These coastal beauties are hardier in the sun than one would expect. Poppies and miniature lupine are setting seed. Remember, seeds need to breathe and paper sacks are good collecting and or storage containers. The Mexican primrose that is blooming is being fussy about getting sun. They bloom dependent upon the amount of sunlight they receive, full sun being preferred.



## Upcoming Events and Classes

• **April 19<sup>th</sup> 1PM-3PM**—California Department of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Lecture Series  
**Concerns Over Phytophthora Plant Pathogen Introductions in Native Plant Nurseries and Restoration Sites.**

Natural Resources Building,  
ground floor auditorium  
1416 Ninth Street,  
Sacramento, CA 95814



Cornell University-  
Phytophthora blight on peppers

This presentation will review recent findings on the threats to California native vegetation posed by *Phytophthora* plant pathogens and management actions needed to prevent introduction and limit the spread of exotic *Phytophthora* species.

The lecture will also be webcast.

Details and Registration at:  
<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Lectures>

• **April 23<sup>rd</sup> 12AM-5PM & April 24<sup>th</sup> 10AM-4PM**—**11<sup>th</sup> Annual Cambria Wildflower Show**

Cambria Veteran's Memorial Building  
1000 Main Street, Cambria, California 93428

- Hundreds of freshly picked Central Coast wildflowers and other flora will be presented and described.
- Edible, medicinal, rare, invasive, and poisonous plants will be identified.
- Botanists will be on hand to answer questions.

Admission is free for students; otherwise, it's a \$3.00 donation.

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual Cambria Wildflower Show**  
(continued)

Details—contact the Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserver at (805) 927-2856.

<http://www.ffrpcambria.org/calendar.html>

• **April 23<sup>rd</sup> 10AM**—**Saving the Pollinators - FREE**

Intermountain Nursery  
30443 Auberry Road  
Prather, CA 93651

- Learn about threats pollinators face.
- Learn how to create a pollinator friendly habitat.



Details--[www.intermountainnursery.com/](http://www.intermountainnursery.com/)

• **May 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>**—**Introduction to Plant Identification**

Dye Creek Preserve  
Los Molinos, CA (between Redding & Chico)

- Taught at a beginner level and open to anyone interested.
- Learn or improve knowledge of plant terminology and the basic characteristics of dominant California plants.
- Gain field experience with common northern California plants.



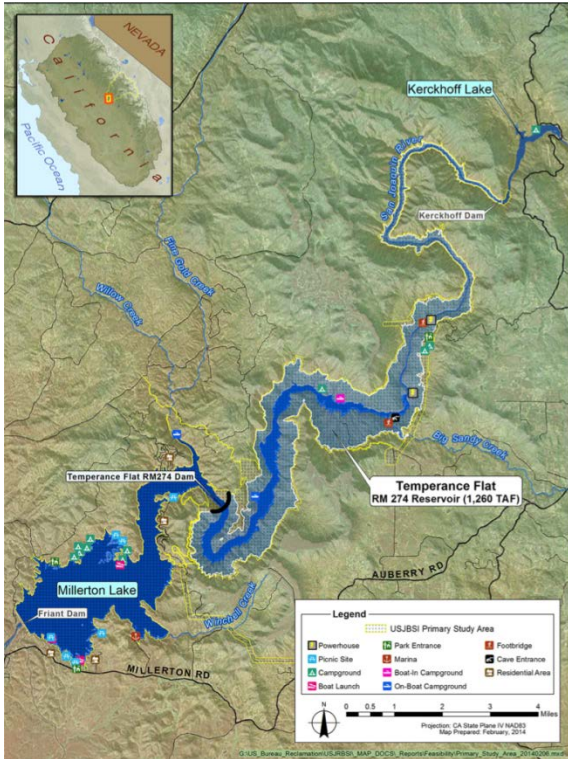
Instructor: Josie Crawford, Botanist  
Cost: \$375 CNPS Members / \$395 Non-Members.  
Includes lodging at Dye Creek.

Details--contact Becky Reilly at (916) 447-2677 x 207 or [breilly@cnps.org](mailto:breilly@cnps.org)

Register at:  
<http://www.cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/>

# CONSERVATION REPORT

--Jeanne Larson



USBR

Unfortunately, we are hearing that we need a 655 foot tall dam at Temperance Flat (costing several billions) in the election spots on television and in letters to the editor in the Fresno Bee newspaper. A news article in the Bee, covering remarks from Senator Feinstein, are troubling as endangered species appear to be taking a hit as the drought continues. A number of unusual plants grow in the San Joaquin River Gorge.

The proposed dam would eliminate 17 miles of the San Joaquin River Trail. The Trail terminates near Kaiser Ridge. Google San Joaquin River Trail, be inspired by a picture of the San Joaquin River Gorge, and plan a day hike.



Friends of the River.org

## CHINA CREEK REPORT FOR MARCH 2016

--Warren Shaw

It had rained cats and dogs on Friday afternoon, but Saturday was predicted to be "dry." True, it was not raining, but the morning started off a little foggy and dewy, and the Park was anything but dry. Nonetheless, a good group of intrepid souls arrived to fight the good fight. We hacked away on the overhanging willows along Smith Avenue, partly to widen the approach and partly to provide material for the brush barrier we intend to build to replace the fence destroyed by the dredging of the creek/ditch at the east side of the "sanctuary" area.

Unhappily, Hank was too sick to drag the brush for us with his tractor, but we're confident we'll get it moved eventually. Fortunately, Helen had made Irish soda bread for break, so it was still a pretty good day.



<https://pixabay.com>

We also sent folks out to hunt thistle rosettes. They found plenty and dispatched as many as possible (despite wet feet), but there are lots remaining for our next work party on April 16, from 8am to 12pm (please note earlier starting time). We hope you can join us.

--submitted by **Marian Orvis**

## **Indian fig, "Tuna"** (*Opuntia ficus-indica*)

The Indian fig is a large-growing cactus that was introduced into California from Mexico and was cultivated in hedgerows in the days of the Spaniards and the early settlers. Both the indigenous peoples and whites made much use of the fruits of this plant and of several others that are very much like it, notably prickly pear (*Opuntia x occidentalis*). The fruits were eaten raw, having been peeled carefully after removing the spines. The flavor of the fruits of different species varies somewhat.

Good syrup was made by boiling the peeled fruits and straining out the seeds. The Spanish settlers further reduced the syrup to make a dark red or nearly black paste known as *Queso de Tuna*.

Another use for these plants, which is still current among the Mexican population, is to gather the young joints (or pads) before the spines have hardened, put them into strips, and boil tender to serve as a vegetable. These young pads are known as nopales and are considered a very fine vegetable. A good pickle is also made from them.



© 2003 Michelle Cloud-Hughes

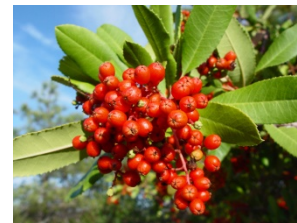
The mature fleshy pads of the Indian fig were split, soaked and used to poultice bruises. The pads were boiled and crushed, and the resulting sticky juice was added to mortar or used in whitewash to make it stick more securely to adobe walls.

Among the indigenous peoples, the fully ripe fruit were gathered, dried, and the seeds winnowed out and stored to be ground into flour for atole, a traditional and thick hot beverage. The dry seeds of the beavertail (*Opuntia basilaris*) and several other cacti were used in this same way among the desert tribes. The ripe fruit, however, was too dry to eat fresh like that of the Indian figs.

## **Toyon** (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)

Known also as California holly and Christmas berry, the toyon is a common shrub or small tree that grows on brushy slopes and in canyons throughout much of California and into northern Lower California. The bright scarlet berries were gathered by many of the indigenous tribes. Rarely eaten raw, they were cooked either by roasting over hot coals—the bunches of berries being held over the fire as they were gathered—or by tossing in a cooking basket with hot pebbles or wood coals. This slight cooking seemed to take away the somewhat bitter taste of the fruit.

Spanish Californians also used these fruits—cooking them by putting them into boiling water or even boiling them slightly and straining off the water. The berries were then wrapped in a hot cloth and left to steam for as long as two hours, after which they were ready to serve. Another way to cook them was to put the fruit into a bag, sprinkle with sugar, and place, covered, in a slow oven "for while."



© 2004 George W. Hartwell

A pleasant "cider" was also made from these berries by Spanish Californians and American settlers. The indigenous people in some areas made a tea from the bark and from the leaves, which was used as a cure for stomach aches and other aches and pains.

In addition, the fishermen of Catalina Island are said to have used the bark of this tree in tanning their nets and sails. Also noteworthy, the name Hollywood was given on account of the number of California hollies that grew in the hills of the original subdivision.

From: "Early Uses of California Plants" by Edward K. Balls, University of California Press, 1962

## Membership

John LuValle

Thanks to new and renewing members.

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact John LuValle at [jluvalle@mcn.org](mailto:jluvalle@mcn.org)

The Sequoia chapter serves Fresno, Madera, and Kings Counties.

The IRS considers dues in excess of \$12 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible. Renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card. As an option, renew automatically year after year. It is quick, easy, and convenient, and reduces renewal-mailing costs. Visit [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) and click on the JOIN button.

### Next Newsletter: May 2016

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Laura Castro [lacastror@outlook.com](mailto:lacastror@outlook.com). The deadline for the next newsletter is **Sunday, May 1**



## SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS\* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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## JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY RENEW

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

I wish to affiliate with the Sequoia Chapter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/>	Student, Limited Income	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	\$45
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family, Group, or Library	\$75
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plant Lover	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/>	Patron	\$300
<input type="checkbox"/>	Benefactor	\$600

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

New Member       Renewing Member

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

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April 2016

## CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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

### MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

--**Madeleine Mitchell** [madeleine43@comcast.net](mailto:madeleine43@comcast.net)

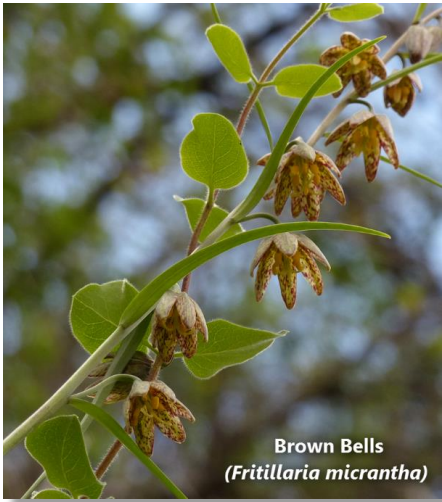
My husband, Paul, and I took two trips to our favorite desert wildflower area this spring and El Nino did its job. We went the last few days of both February and March. Photos were taken recently at the Bureau of Land Management Short Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern near the small town of Inyokern. We've gone there to camp for years and found a new plant this time. Its common name is 'hole in the sand', botanically it is *Nicolletia occidentalis*. Its rather succulent leaves and the flower color really set it apart from other blooming plants. The Mojave indigo bush (*Psoralea arborescens*) was also in bloom, along with dozens of other wildflowers.



Alabama Hills – BLM photograph

We also went to the Alabama Hills near Lone Pine for 2 nights and enjoyed the snow covered Sierra Nevada and Inyo Mountains plus the flowers there. We camped between the two mountain ranges and even got a little snow.

Returning home we found our flannelbush (*Fremontodendron*) and over a dozen blooms on an alum root (*Heuchera micrantha*) that's been in the garden for years being enjoyed by a honey bee. All my native grasses are in bloom and I can't walk in my meadow—it's too full. Not many weeds to pull anyway, but I over planted. Even though I'm a UC Master Gardener, I still make many mistakes.



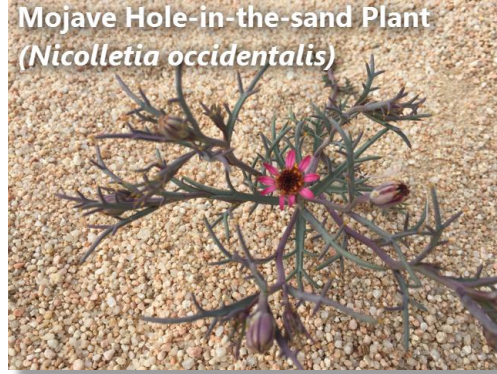
Brown Bells  
(*Fritillaria micrantha*)



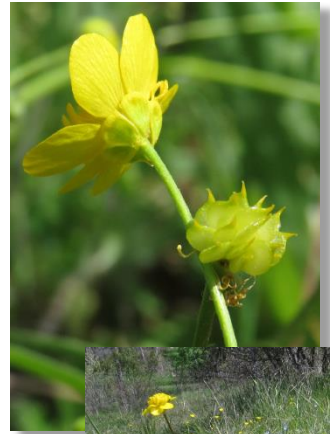
Golden Brodiaea



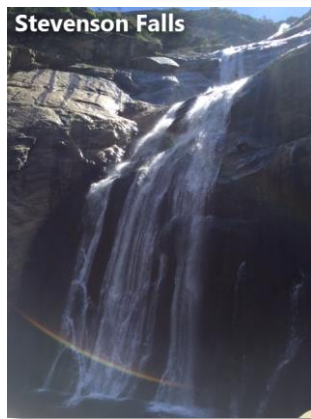
Lupine and poppies



Mojave Hole-in-the-sand Plant  
(*Nicolletia occidentalis*)



San Joaquin River  
Powerhouse



Stevenson Falls



Waterfall Buttercup  
(*Ranunculus hystriculus*)



Short Canyon  
(Mojave)



Western Buttercup  
(*Ranunculus occidentalis*)



Coral Bells  
(*Heuchera micrantha*)



Royal Larkspur  
(*Delphinium variegatum*  
ssp. *variegatum*)



Indian Warrior  
(*Pedicularis densiflora*)



Meadowfoam  
(*Limnanthes douglasii*  
ssp. *rosea*)



Shooting Stars  
(*Dodecatheon species*)



Waterfall Buttercup  
(*Ranunculus hystriculus*)



Fremontodendron

## April 2016 Sequoia Chapter CNPS

### Photo credits:

**Eileen Bennett:** Meadowfoam (Big Table overlooking Temperance Flat), Western Buttercup (atop Burrough Mountain)

**Tom Zimoski:** Royal Larkspur, Brown Bells, Shooting Stars, Indian Warrior, Waterfall Buttercup (Million Dollar Mile Road)

**Carolyn Nolan:** San Joaquin River and Powerhouse 3, Stevenson Falls (Million Dollar Mile Road)

**Madeleine Mitchell:** Fremontodendron, Coral Bells, Mojave Hole-in-the-sand, Short Canyon

**Helen Shaw:** Golden Brodiaea, Lupine and poppies