



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

February 2005

CHAPTER EVENTS

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, February 15. 7:00 p.m.

“Yosemite National Park – Invasive Plant Management Plan” with Brent Johnson, Botanist, YNP

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

We are fortunate to live so close to beautiful Yosemite National Park with its incredible diversity of native plants and wildlife. One of the more challenging threats to the future health of Yosemite’s flora is.....you guessed it.....WEEDS! Brent will give a presentation on the invasive plant issues facing Yosemite National Park and the new comprehensive plan the National Park Service is crafting, with input from the public. Included will be some unique and beautiful native plant photos.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Park’s public scoping period ends the day of our meeting, so if you wish to give your support or offer your opinion, visit < <http://www.nps.gov/yose/planning/ipmp/> > to submit comments. You can also give them to Brent at the meeting.

Future Meeting Programs

Tuesday March 15	Flora of the Sequoia National Forest Fletcher Linton, Forest Botanist
Tuesday April 19	TBA

China Creek Update

By Warren Shaw

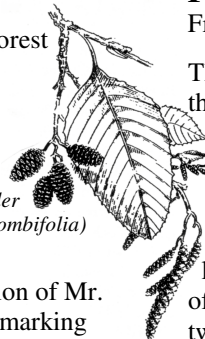
Sanger High Construction students, under the direction of Mr. Robert Juarez, are making numbers for the 19 posts marking stations on the interpretive trail. Scientific fieldwork on the various stations is nearing completion, and writing on the trail brochure will begin shortly. Education Chair Peggy Jones, is working on a second grant proposal, and we are working with Reedley College instructor Kent Kinney in hopes of getting some help from his students in trail construction.

In addition we still have some hopes of setting up a grazing trial this spring in the north section of the park and to that end are asking volunteers to pencil in Saturday, February 19, as a fence inspection and repair workday. (We’ll email those who’ve signed up as “willing to be notified” to confirm. If you’re not on this list and would be interested, please call Warren Shaw, 559/855-4519 or email at <warshaw@netptc.net>.)

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

Chapter Native Plant Sale

We need a volunteer to coordinate our chapter’s Native Plant Sale. Interested? Contact Warren Shaw 559/855-4519 or email at <warshaw@netptc.net>



White Alder
(*Alnus rhombifolia*)

Fresno Home and Garden Show

Friday - Sunday, March 4-6

The CNPS Sequoia Chapter is offered a booth at no charge for the entire 3 days of this event. As Fresno and the surrounding area continue their development growth march, there is increased talk about water conservation at the individual homeowner level.

The Home and Garden Show is a rare opportunity to expose large numbers of Valley residents to the advantages and beauty of California native plants. Please volunteer to spend a hour or two in the booth, helping with this important outreach effort. Volunteers are provided free admission to the Home & Garden Show. Remember that you do not need to be an expert to attend the booth. A simple smile and a willingness to keep the table supplied with handouts goes a long way!

Contact Marian Orvis at 226-0145 or <mforvet@earthlink.net> for more information.

Wildflower Alert!!

The recent rains bode well for a luxuriant wildflower show nearly everywhere in California. Make time to drive through the foothills, take a hike in the Sierra, or look closely at roadside native plants or those in undeveloped fields and appreciate their hardiness and beauty.

Check out the “Related Activities” page of this newsletter and the “Observations” section. They offer some specific places and activities that will be well worth your time.

I am I plus my surroundings and if I do not preserve
the latter, I do not preserve myself.

--from ‘Meditations on Quixote’ by José Ortega y Gasset, 1914

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



My message this month results from something I've recently written: the Chapter's Annual Report to the State.

I began my "Overview of the Chapter" by explaining that we are a small chapter and that some of us aren't as energetic as we used to be.

As I listed our activities and totaled up estimates of our volunteer hours I was impressed. Here are some examples:

- 8 informative and attractive newsletters
- 8 varied and relevant programs
- 3 of 4 Chapter Council meetings attended by at least 1 chapter representative.
- 1 Chapter Council meeting (June—at SCION) co-sponsored with Alta Peak Chapter. We supplied signs, the evening speaker, refreshments, and an equal share in planning and logistics.
- 8 field trips, some combined with work days at China Creek
- 8 public events at which members presented displays and literature and did direct or indirect outreach
- 4 (at least) official letters written and distributed in the chapter's name, to commercial and government agencies opposing their current policies, positions, or directions
- 6 (at least) public meetings attended by chapter representatives voicing Society positions
- 1 plant sale carried out (somewhat less profitable than in the past.)

And...last but certainly not least...

- 1 Big Restoration and Education Project started (see "China Creek update" on the first page of this newsletter.

Members also cooperated with other environmental organizations, held a yard sale, raised and sold plants, published the Using Native Plant brochure and program posters, tended native demonstration gardens—both at home and in public places, consulted with various people and agencies, and did tons of paperwork.

Based on estimates from individual members and my own records, we committed at least 908 hours of time to "...protecting and preserving..." (I'm sure this figure is low!)

I'm feeling pretty proud now.

-- Warren Shaw

FRESNO CITY PUBLIC WORKS

The City of Fresno Public Works Department is embarking on a pilot program to plant California natives along median islands within the city limits.

As a first step, on January 27 at Fresno City Hall, a meeting was arranged between Public Works staff and a group of local native plant experts and enthusiasts, Tree Fresno, and water conservation professionals. The meeting focused on development of a plant list suitable for median island plantings and the longer term plan of the city to change the landscape specifications for new development to incorporate native plants and encourage water conservation.

A single meeting does not make a successful project. However, everyone in attendance agreed that it was a good start.

The pilot program will involve plantings along seven specific median islands, three in Southeast Fresno, two in Northeast Fresno, and two in Northwest Fresno. Plant lists are being developed and planting recommendations will be made for each median. City staff are planning to have at least three of the medians planted within the next thirty days as demonstrations. City workers will apply mulch to all of the targeted medians to protect the soil and reduce moisture loss.

Future newsletters will have updates on this exciting project.

-- Joseph Oldham
Conservation Co-Chair

FEBRUARY CHAPTER MEETING

Sierra National Forest botanist Joanna Clines provided an overview of numerous activities and rulings regarding land conservation, weed progress, sensitive plants, and hydro-power re-licensing.

It is important to be aware of the incredible amount of regulation that exists regarding our natural resources. Only through knowledge and involvement can we ensure that they are not robbed.

At the same time, one can't help but reflect on the amount of regulation needed to control human conduct in these public lands – and only in the past 200 years.

OBSERVATIONS

According to Joanna Clines, the poppies are starting to bloom in the Merced River Canyon, along with baby blue eyes, popcorn flower, and lace pod. She was at Incline Road, just west of El Portal, on Tuesday, February 1, and some south-facing slopes were sprinkled with more than a few orange poppies (*Eschscholzia caespitosa*) and patches of sky-blue baby blue eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*).

If you want to see this for yourself, drive on Highway 140 from Mariposa towards Yosemite, and as you descend into the Canyon at Briceburg, keep your eyes open. Hite's Cove Trail is probably a good hike right now, or drive towards El Portal and cross the bridge over the Merced River just past Redbud Picnic Area, then double back westward along Incline Road. Call Joanna if you want more information: 559/877-2218, ext. 3150, or email <jclines@fs.fed.us >.

Warren Shaw says the foothills are very green with many plants beginning to blossom: Fiddleneck, Popcorn Flower, Red Maids, Miner's Lettuce, to name a few. Buckeyes and Twinberries are leafing out and wild cucumber vines are beginning to creep and climb.

Only now after the fifth or sixth day of sunny weather and 55+ degrees are the common spring flowers beginning to blossom in the flat land between the foothills and the city. This land at the bottom of the Valley floor is the last part of our area to let go of the winter fog and overcast skies.

Most of these early bloomers are the same as in the foothills. It's been gratifying to watch the spread of Miner's Lettuce and Red Maids, and the accompanying birds that enjoy their seed.

-- Editor

Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Chuck Peck, Executive Director of the Sierra Foothill Conservancy, will speak on the new Sierra Nevada Conservancy at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 North Millbrook Ave., Fresno, for their First Friday event on March 4 at 7 p.m. Contact Bill Head at 855-2678 or Dick Haas at 439-7727.



Purple Owl's Clover (*Castilleja exserta*)

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Classes

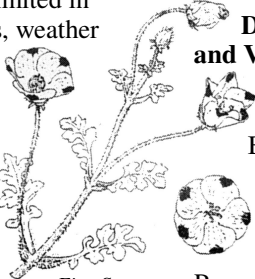
Classes require early reservations (\$10/person, \$20/family). Space is limited. Bring lunch and water for daytime classes. Visit <www.sierrafoothill.org> for more information, registration, and changes/additions or call 559/855-3473.

Saturday March 5	Mushrooms of the Sierra Foothills. At the McKenzie Preserve with local mushroom expert Russell Kokx. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday March 19	Wildflowers of the McKenzie Preserve. With botanist John Stebbins, this popular class is held at the height of the wildflower season on the Preserve. Includes a strenuous hike to the top of the table to see vernal pool species and great scenery. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hikes

Hikes are free, led by experienced volunteers, not limited in size, and begin at 9:00 a.m. Call for meeting points, weather information, and possible cancellations.

Saturday February 12	Black Mountain. To summit or out along the ridge. 4 or 6 miles.
Sunday February 13	McKenzie Loop. 7 miles and very strenuous.
Saturday February 19	McKenzie Table top. 6 miles, moderately strenuous
Saturday February 26	McKenzie Smith Basin. 5 miles, very strenuous.
Saturday March 5	McKenzie Archeological Site. Leisurely 2 mile walk.
Saturday March 12	McKenzie Table Top. 6 miles, moderately strenuous
Sunday March 13	McKenzie Smith Basin. 5 miles, very strenuous.
Saturday March 19	McKenzie Loop. 7 miles and very strenuous.
Saturday March 20	Miller Summit. 4-6 miles round trip
Saturday March 26	Wildflower walk at the McKenzie. Moderate hike with stops to identify plants



Five Spot
(*Nemophila maculata*)

Intermountain Nursery Classes

Foothill Wildflowers

Saturday, March 26, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

The morning will be spent walking and recognizing local flower species. Meet at the Nursery and carpool. Bring a hand lens, binoculars, and sun protection. Class is \$10.00

Native Plants in the Landscape

Saturday, April 2, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

This class is offered by Bonnie Bladen of Intermountain Nursery. Tour the demonstration gardens and find out what will do well in your location. Cultural requirements of the plants will be discussed and handouts are available. Class is \$10.00.

Call 559.855.3113 or <intermountain@psnw.com>

University of California Cooperative Extension Class at Riverview Ranch

Drought Tolerant Landscaping for Mountain, Foothill, and Valley Homes. Wednesday, April 13, 2005, 9:30 – 12:00.

Learn basic techniques to establish or convert to a drought tolerant landscape in Central California locations. Bonnie Bladen from Intermountain Nursery will discuss general guidelines and answer specific questions about plants, soils, watering systems and procedures to start using less water in your yard.

Pre-registration is by mail (\$10 to UCCE, 1720 S. Maple Ave., Fresno, CA 93702.) <cefresno.ucdavis.edu> or 559/456-7285.

So Cal Restoration and Revegetation Workshop

March 8 and 9 in the San Diego area. Sponsored by the California Native Grasslands Association

March 8 in Escondido on the Santa Rosa Plateau. March 9 in the District 11 Caltrans office in San Diego and on to the Otay Mesa. This workshop features local presenters with first-hand knowledge of area-specific species, techniques, and examples of Southern California relic and restoration sites. Tuition: members \$275; non-members \$310. Maximum of 60 students. Visit <<http://www.cnga.org/calendar.php>> for the registration form.

Sierra Spring Sojourn

May 13-15, 2005

The Bristlecone Chapter of CNPS holds their 8th Biennial Sierra Spring Sojourn on May 13-15, 2005, at the Bernasconi Center in Big Pine. The Sojourn is a weekend of field trips and evening programs focusing on the flora of the White Mountains, Owens Valley and east side of the Sierra Nevada.

Early and abundant rain and snow raises expectations for a spectacular parade of flowers in the Owens Valley this spring.

If you would like to receive a registration pack by email when they are available in March, contact Sherryl Taylor at staylor@npgcable.com. To receive the registration pack by mail, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Sherryl Taylor at P.O. Box 1638, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. For more information, call 760-924-8742.

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>>.

Saturday & Sunday March 12-13	Intro to Morphology and Identification of Flowering Plants
Saturday & Sunday March 19-20	Basics of Botanical Illustration
Saturday & Sunday March 26-27	Intro to Digital Macro-Photography Techniques.



- **CNPS Sequoia Chapter Native Plant Sale**, typically in September. Consider growing natives in 4" pots for sale – they are 100% profit! Contact Jeanne Larson for additional information. 559/243-0815 or email <jrjlars@aol.com>
- **Fresno Home and Garden Show** on Friday - Sunday, March 4-6 at the Fresno Fairgrounds. Each year (this year is the 19th!) this event grows in popularity with increasing exhibits and attendance. Our Chapter is offered a booth, gratis, to spread the word for our beloved California native plants. If you would like to partake in this year's free fun, contact Marian Orvis, 226-0145. You'll be glad you did!
- A joint **"River Walk"** with El Rio Reyes Trust. Sunday, April 24, 1:30 pm. Opportunities to volunteer TBA

- **China Creek Workday** tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 19th to repair fences and protect vulnerable plants.
- **Teach the River Symposium for Teachers** on Saturday, February 26, 9 am-3 pm at CART (Center for Advanced Research and Technologies in Clovis). A five-year old event, this is attended by formal and non-formal environmental educators from across the San Joaquin Valley. It creatively presents information about river studies and watershed related issues in a weekend setting. Saturday includes classes for participants. Sunday is for field trips. Our Chapter has an information table on Saturday. Sign up with Marian Orvis at 226-0145.



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

EMILY B. ROBERSON <EROBERSON@BIOLOGICALDIVERSITY.ORG >

Pledge to uphold the Endangered Species Act

Two bills were introduced in the last Congress that would significantly weaken the Act. The authors of the bills have signaled their intent to make the systematic weakening of the Endangered Species Act a priority for this new Congress. In California, Defenders of Wildlife wants Senator Feinstein to hear from a cross-section of California communities that endangered species conservation is a California value.

Defenders of Wildlife is asking California groups and individuals to sign an Endangered Species Conservation Pledge. Details are at < www.saaveesa.org > They are also organizing a Call-in Day to Senator Feinstein's San Francisco office on Friday, February 11 and a vernal pools habitat tour in east San Joaquin County on Saturday, Feb 12 from 10 am-2pm, departing from Stockton. For more information, contact Saerom Park at < saerom@greencorps.org > or 916-313-5807.

Rare plant species nearly wiped out by California work crews

(02-03) 03:08 PST MARSHALL, Calif. (AP) -- One of California's rarest plants was nearly wiped out of existence when county workers used a backhoe to unclog a roadside drain in the species' sole habitat.

The Baker's larkspur, a purplish plant that blooms April through May and grows up to 2-feet tall, is found in only one place in the world -- near a road in western Marin County.

The damage followed heavy rains last October that pushed debris down a hillside and into the drain, flooding the road. The backhoe being used to clear the plug cut into the hillside at the exact spot where most of the Baker's larkspur grow. In minutes, a population of 100 plants was reduced to five.

"They had to clear it, but a little bit of notice would have been nice," Doreen Smith of the Marin Native Plant Society told the Marin Independent Journal. "We could have got in there and saved the plants."

Although a 200-foot stretch of the hillside was marked to alert county workers about the Baker's larkspur, the backhoe crew didn't know the exact location of the plants, said road maintenance supervisor Pete Maendle. "The crews knew the area was sensitive, but it was an emergency situation," Maendle said. "When storms come you don't have time to make plans. It's unfortunate that this happened."

Members of the Marin Native Plant Society, Marin County Public Works Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state Department of Fish and Game met Tuesday to discuss the fate of the plant and how to better protect it.

Scientists and Governments Call for Conservation of Biological Diversity in "Paris Declaration"

An international conference on "Biodiversity, Science and Governance" concluded on January 28. The conference was hosted in Paris and was attended by scientists and government officials from dozens of countries.

The conference examined numerous issues in biological diversity conservation, including the economic and health benefits of conservation, current extinction rates, taxonomic challenges, and the roles of governments and the private sector.

A conference summary and reports on presentations are available at < www.iisd.ca/sd/icb/sdvol1100num5e.html >. Links to individual sessions are at the end of the session summaries.

The conference produced both a Statement and a Declaration, both calling for increased global emphasis on biological diversity conservation. Both are excellent tools that can be used to show the global consensus, among both governments and the scientific community, that the extinction crisis is real, that it poses dire threats to human economies, public health, and social stability, and that urgent measures must be taken to conserve biological diversity.

For more information and for the the Statement and the Paris Declaration, see the conference homepage at < http://www.recherche.gouv.fr/biodiv2005paris/en/index.htm >

The presskit for the Conference contains useful data and other information on the global biological diversity crisis. It is online at http://www.recherche.gouv.fr/biodiv2005paris/en/presskit.pdf

The Natural Garden Debate



Throughout the country there are still many homeowner associations or city weed ordinances that are being used to prevent or prohibit "natural" landscaping. Some early books on the subject are still relevant today and include *Second Nature* by Michael Pollan, *Noah's Garden* by Sara Stein, *The Natural Habitat Garden* by Ken Druse, and *Planting Noah's Garden: Further Adventures in Backyard Ecology* by Sara Stein.

These books provide inspirational reading as well as good information for dealing with such challenges.

The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person doing it.

-- Chinese proverb

Newsletter

Send your perspectives, wonderments, poetry, or drawings to me. Have you visited a great Web site recently? Are you particularly happy (or disappointed) with a native plant you've nurtured (or ignored)? Would you like to see more of /less of a topic? Do you know of hikes or other activities in your area?

The Observations section also welcomes your input. The Sequoia Chapter covers a wide range of climates and topography. And you don't have to be a gardener to appreciate California's incredible plant diversity. Indeed, gardeners should be sure to get out and learn from nature.



Send newsletter contributions, corrections, or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at < nmtv@att.net >.

The next newsletter will be the March issue. Contributions are due by Wednesday, March 2.

SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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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: _____

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

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

February 2005



CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

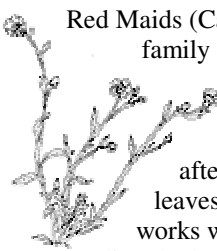
c/o Jeanne Larson • 3457 Redlands • Fresno, CA 93726

**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 PLANTS

Red Maids and Fiddleneck

This month's featured plants are two commonly seen California natives that herald the beginning of spring and remind us not to overlook many of the common native plants that are reliably there, year after year. They are not rare or endangered, but this does not diminish their value or beauty.



Red Maids (*Calandrinia ciliata*) are members of the purslane family and germinate as soon as the rains begin in the fall. They bloom in the cool, damp conditions of late winter. Small, bright, four-petaled magenta flowers open in the afternoons of sunny days and close at night. The leaves are edible and have a tang like arugula that works well in salads. They move quickly into disturbed areas and serve as a colonizer plant in restoration projects. These plants play an important role because they are nitrogen-fixing and in their short life they make the soil favorable for longer-lived plants.

They usually complete their cycle by drying up with the onset of warmer spring weather. The abundant tiny black seeds are favored by doves but have frequently been found in archaeological sites and are known to be collected and eaten by Native Americans. They were also used as a pot herb by early settlers.

Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia menziesii* var. *intermedia*) is a California native plant (some say "weed"). There are 17 species and sub species of *Amsinckia* that are native to California. Lewis and Clark collected Fiddleneck during their return trip in 1806 as shown by herbarium specimens in their collection.

Known mostly for their toxicity to horses, swine, and cattle, or the irritation caused by rubbing against the skin, they are another plant that readily colonizes disturbed areas such as roadsides, plowed fire breaks and orchards. Their benefit to the land is similar to Red Maids.

Their toxicity is mainly a result of the presence of the seeds in grain and grain screenings fed to livestock.

In the presence of adequate grazing, animals do not normally eat Fiddleneck. Interestingly, cattle and horses are thirty to forty times more susceptible to this toxicity than sheep and goats.

