



China Creek – April Update – Warren Shaw

It started with an unexpected rain shower – and by the end we were looking for shade. But it was a great day for pulling weeds, mostly the evil Yellow Star Thistle. Because this has been a wet spring, it is still possible to pull most YST plants by hand, an arduous, but most satisfying approach.

While most of us found plenty of plants in the southwest section of the Park to attack with hands, hoes and shovels, Hank Urbach sprayed parts of the southeast, “chemical” area with the selective herbicide Milestone, using his tractor and newly acquired spray rig. A bad day for weeds; a good day for us.

Initially we were pleased to find relatively little trash around the gate, and the signs and kiosk unmarked by graffiti. However we noticed patches of broken glass on the pavement, and Hank told us that somebody had broken into the car of a park visitor who was fishing in one of the ponds. This happened again the following week. Law Enforcement has been notified, and we have asked the County for additional security measures.

By our next workday, on Saturday, June 18, we expect most YST plants to be in bloom, so will switch tactics to cutting and hauling to the pavement, to be covered with plastic and “solarized.” This has seemed to work well in the past, and is somewhat less laborious than hand pulling. We’d love to have more hands for this good work, please join us if you can. (Ingrid Carmean has promised her famous homemade strawberry ice cream for break).

To get to the park take 180/Kings east of Academy to Smith or Oliver. Go south about ¼ mile to the intersection of Smith and Rainbow. Follow Smith south about ¼ mile to the Park gate. For more information, call or email Warren Shaw: 559-855-4519, warshaw@netptc.net.



Chris and Madeleine with Prize-winning YST

Grand Bluff Forest – Two Opportunities
Saturdays, June 4 & 11, 9:30 – 3:00 Free
Ed. note: Our late snows make it wise to verify.
Intermountainnursery.com ph. 559-855-3113

Ray Laclergue & Bonnie Bladen, owners of Intermountain Nursery will lead tours of their watershed and forest restoration project, ongoing since 2003. Learn about forest thinning and fire-safe management; see mountain wildflowers. These hikes will be mildly strenuous for 4-5 hours. Wear hiking boots and long pants; bring a sack lunch and water. Meet at Dinkey Creek Road Park N Ride at 9:30 AM. Take Hwy 168 E. to Shaver Lake; then right on Dinkey Creek Road 1 mile.

Field trip to Shuteye Peak – update

We received the note below from trip leader, Joanna Clines:

With the snowpack nearly 200% of normal, and roads leading to Shuteye Peak characteristically slow to melt off in normal years, let alone years like this, I need to postpone this trip 2 weeks. (from June 11 to June 26) I selected Sunday because there is another Sierra Foothills Chapter field trip on Saturday, June 25th.

Please let me know if you are able to come now that the date has changed. I’ll get another email out soon with more details about the trip. Thanks!! jjclines@sti.net

Clean Up of Tollhouse Rock

By Jane Pritchard

I waited at the Park & Ride at the bottom of the 4-lane, and nobody had showed up by 9:15. I had visions of being like the little red hen (doing it myself) and hoped Eileen would meet me there. There were two *Carpenteria californica* bushes in glorious bloom at the pullout on 168 just before the turn onto Tollhouse Road. Eileen and her friend Gaye were waiting at the dirt road to Tollhouse Rock immersed in the noise of dirt bikes tearing up the landscape.

We ambled in on the dirt road. All the same great flowers that I reported last year were present. Last fall the steep, deeply rutted road to the Rock had been graded and widened. Rains had eroded the road again but it was not as bad as before. A clump of *Orobanche fasciculata* (clustered broom-rape) grew on the roadside. It is parasitic on the roots of other plants. I have only seen it near *Eriodictyon californicum*. It also grows on *Artemisia*, *Eriogonum*, and others. At the higher rock Eileen showed me an oracle oak, a hybrid of *Quercus kelloggii* (California black oak) and *Q. wizlizenii* (interior live oak).

A woman and her brother had cleaned up about a month ago. They did a first-rate job. About all we found were recently discarded cans, broken glass, and gun shells. Shells are like pulling weeds – you think you got them all, look back, and see gobs more.

Gaye had to leave so Eileen and I hiked up the road south of the Rock. A couple of patches of baby blue-eyes (*Nemophila menziesii*) were blooming in a sunny area. There were many *Quercus garryana* var. *breweri* (Oregon oak). A little higher in the shade, the white flowers of *Staphylea bolanderi* (Sierra bladder nut) were just losing their freshness. Back in the open again *Platystemon californicus* (cream cups) had single, all cream colored flowers on hairy stems. We found one stalk of *Fritillaria micrantha* (brown bells) on a shaded bank. Eileen had seen more but fritillaries are hard to see - "find the fritillary in this picture."



Nemophila

At the hill top we ate with the warm sun on our backs and the snowy mountains to the east. Just enough haze gave the scene a dreamy quality. Considering the big disappointment of there being no trash, it was a great day!

Observations

--from Warren Shaw

Farewell to Spring and Mariposa Lilly, along with fragrant Buckeyes are the showiest bloomers in the foothills these days. Spice bush, other Clarkias, Elderberry, Penstamen, and yellow Monkey Flower are blooming prettily as well, recently joined by the first harvest brodiaea.



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Despite the cool wet spring, the annual grasses on the hillsides are mostly brown, and the blue oaks are getting blue as they prepare for the hot weather ahead. Doveweed and milkweed are starting to pop up. We don't expect to see many creamy curly-leaved soaproot blossoms, since something – probably deer – has eaten most of the tops of the tall stems. Local fauna have clearly benefited from the wet winter and spring, and should be ready for the long dry summer.



Here's Why

By Jane Pritchard

A fellow hiker told me a woman had wondered why God hadn't made more red flowers. This may be the reason. An insect's visible spectrum is shifted toward smaller wavelengths of light than humans see. Insects usually don't see red (longest visible wavelength of light to humans) but do see in the ultraviolet range (shorter wavelength than humans see). If you look at flowers under ultraviolet light, many patterns and tracks appear, leading to the center where nectar is located. Insects brush past the stamens to get at the nectar, pollen sticks to insects' body hairs, and the next flowers they visit are pollinated. Insects existed long before flowers and may have selected against red flowers. Red flowers are usually pollinated by hummingbirds.

Membership

Thelma Valdez

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact Thelma Valdez at nmtv@unwiredbb.com. The Sequoia chapter serves Fresno, Madera, and Kings counties.



Thanks to *New and Renewing Members (Apr./May)

Fresno County: Burgess, Hutchinson, *Laikam, Larson, Latimer, McClanahan, Orvis, Phillips, *Plunk, Rulloda, Shaw, Smith, Tietz

Madera County: Clines

Out of area: Kreps

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 and click on the JOIN button.

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CALIFORNIA
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**Plant Science Training Program presents
Vegetation Rapid Assessment/Relevé Workshop. June 7-9 Sonoma County**

Legends of the Fall: Exploring the Clandestine flora of early fall in the eastern Mojave Desert Sept 22-24

Questions - **Josie Crawford**
jcrawford@cnps.org (916) 447-2677 ext. 205
<http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/index.php>

Next Newsletter: July/Aug. 2011

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw helshaw@netptc.net. The newsletter deadline is Friday, July 22.



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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.

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CARPENTERIA

May/June 2011



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

Jeanne Larson ♦ 3457 Redlands ♦ Fresno, CA 93726

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MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Madeleine Mitchell

This month I had too many choices for plants to write about; several of the salvias are in bloom including 2 new ones planted last fall. But, what caught my eye last week in the late afternoon was the *Carpenteria californica*. It's the second one I've planted in the past 20 years in my small native garden and the first time it's bloomed. I think the plant is about 3 years old but still small, measuring 2 ft. wide and 2 and 1/2 foot high. The common name is Bush Anemone. It belongs to the Philadelphaceae family, (Mock Orange).

It grows in its natural habitat only between the Kings and San Joaquin Rivers in the foothills of eastern Fresno County. It is also the name of our chapter's newsletter. A mature plant can be as tall as 12 feet or more in cultivation. It was considered a rare plant in the 1880's and was collected and brought back to England and still grows there presently. So it can take lots of rain. We consider it a drought tolerant plant. During the summer it becomes droopy and appears to be dying, but will perk up when watered deeply. Avoid overhead sprinkling, which can lead to fungal diseases.



CNPS + Sequoia Chapter

**May/June 2011 – Farewell to Spring
Clockwise, from below**

**Carpenteria with chewed leaf--Reedley
Anemopsis -- China Creek
Pink Calochortus—Watts Valley
White Calochortus—Watts Valley
Clarkia and fencepost—Watts Valley
Volunteer Clarkia—Reedley (hybrid?)**

