

**Board Meeting:
Tuesday, February 19, 2007, 6 p.m.
Brooks Ranch Restaurant – Chestnut & 99 Freeway**

Our last Board Meeting of the year was held on Tuesday, November 13 at Perko's. (At press time it had not yet occurred so there is nothing to report!). Due to the Thanksgiving holiday we moved the meeting back by a week. No meetings (general or board) will be held in December or January.

We will hold another board meeting in February on the 19th. Members are encouraged to attend, as we look ahead to activities that we feel support the mission of CNPS, keeping in mind that active volunteers tend to be a small group.

The meeting will be primarily business. Dinner is optional (you cover the cost of your own meal) but lively discussions are likely to ensue so please join us!

General Meetings in March, May, September, and October. Watch the March newsletter for details!

Board Meetings in February, April, August, and November. Watch the February newsletter for details!



CARPENTERIA
Newsletter of
The Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

**November-
December 2007**

China Creek Update

Warren Shaw



The workday planned for October didn't happen because of conflicts, but a recent visit revealed that Vulcan Materials had once again mowed yellow star thistle for us. We have contacted the county asking that cattelman Steve McDonald's weed abatement grazing contract be renewed, so we can continue the combination of grazing, mowing and handwork which seems to be making good progress on the yellow star thistle.

We also met with a representative from PG&E's vegetation management contractor, who wanted to cut a magnificent old cottonwood in the north section of the park. She seemed amenable to pruning instead ~ as long as the County approves.

Someone has pointed out that the November workday, scheduled for Saturday the 24th, would occur during the Thanksgiving weekend; consequently we are moving it to the previous Saturday, Nov. 17. Weeding and trail maintenance will be the order of the day. We hope to see you there.

Workday: Saturday, November 17.

OCTOBER CHAPTER MEETING

October's speaker, Terry Sandridge, provided members with a great deal of interesting information about the lands owned and managed by PG&E (Shaver Lands and Dinkey Lands). These two lands comprise about 20,000 acres and PE&E's management of them takes into consideration four major aspects: water, wildlife, recreation, and timber.

Under their management, which includes timber harvesting and controlled burning, Terry notes that wildlife has increased. This has happened even while logging has continued. Individual trees are selected as part of the thinning process. Over the years PG&E staff has learned, and continues to learn, about ways to maintain forest lands that can provide timber, provide wildlife habitat, and provide recreation. All 20,000 acres are open to the public (non-motorized use) and there are extensive trails with 250 campsites.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Fall has always been a favorite season for me. I enjoy the change of seasons, no matter how slight, and the Harvest Festival at Intermountain Nursery. It gives us a chance to share our knowledge and love for native vegetation and a great chance to network with those who have common interests.

For me, the social butterfly, it's also a time to share my love for natives, a time to shop, and to visit old friends. Ray teased me about being the shopping queen as I helped a blind friend around to buy a Native American flute and hand thrown dishes. I spent time at our booth handing out leaflets and information on California native plants. Of course I left with some penstemons that I hadn't purchased at our plant sale to add to my native garden. It was a wonderful opportunity for our chapter to spread the word about natives. Thanks to Thelma and her mom who handled the booth on Saturday.

As December approaches, I ask all of you to consider the open presidency. My two-years as president comes to an end with 2007.

We definitely need a guiding light and I hope someone is willing to step forward and take the helm. Trust me, it isn't too demanding!. As the holidays approach I wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving and blessed Christmas. May we have Peace and lots of rain in 2008!

~ Peggy Jones

Fall and Winter Garden Activities

Thelma Valdez & friends

Central California winters are the opposite of those in colder parts of the country, where winter is the long resting season and gardeners are encouraged to stay inside where it is warm and peruse garden catalogs in anticipation of Spring. For us, cooler autumn days and mild winters can turn garden chores into an excuse to enjoy a pleasant day outdoors tending the garden.

Yes, maintenance of native plant gardens is far less than with non-native gardens, but to keep plants looking their best and keep weeds at a minimum requires monitoring, occasional pruning, and replenishment of mulch.

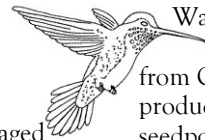
Many California natives are “stump sprouters” and have evolved with fire that burned the woody branches. Of course we cannot burn, but these plants typically do well with heavy pruning every couple of years, often only a few inches from the ground. Some examples are California Fuchsia, mature needlegrasses, Coyote Brush, and Wild Rose, to name a few. A mature Deergrass is big and strong and remains healthy with a heavy pruning every couple of years. Annually, however, do take a strong, stiff rake and rake out the accumulation of leaves.

Gentle pruning of Desert Willow and Mexican Elderberry, removing crossed and low-growing branches, helps to direct new spring growth. Cleveland Sage and other similar sages benefit from shearing about one third of their foliage. This keeps the plant more compact and more densely flowered in the spring. It also makes it easier for white crowned sparrows to maneuver within.

If you have an abundance of Pacific Coast Iris, this would be a good time to divide them. Make sure each division has some roots before putting them back in the ground or sharing with friends. If the roots are not abundant, place them in a few inches of water and within a week or two they'll reward you with roots sturdy enough to allow planting.

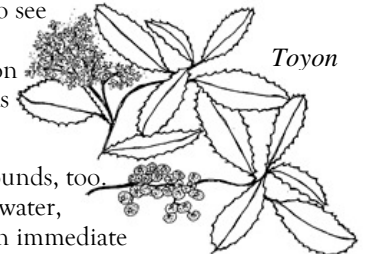
Mulch, mulch, mulch. Mulch will be your springtime friend if you put it down now before weed seeds begin to germinate. Just be sure to keep the mulch away from the plant stem or trunk. Keep mulch 6-12 inches away from the trunk and be sure the trunk doesn't sit in a bowl shape ripe for holding water and causing stem rot.

The most important activity of all is simply to enjoy your garden. Listen to the birds flitting from shrub to shrub. Sit outside, appreciate the beauty of a native garden, and invite a friend to enjoy a cup of something hot while soaking in some California living...or some living California.



Warm, dry weather in early November seemed to keep many plants in a holding pattern from October. California Fuchsias are still producing lots of blossoms even while the seedpods are emerging. Red is a plentiful color in many a native plant garden right about now – the Fuchsia blooms, Toyon berries have already turned bright red, Wild Rose hips the same.

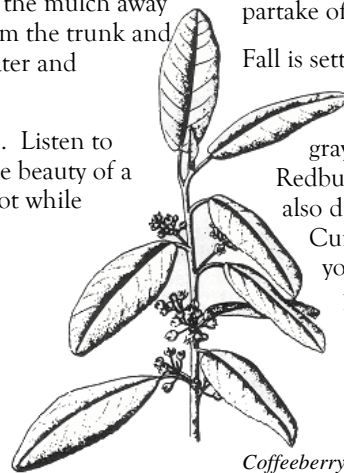
Don't be surprised to see a group of Cedar Waxwings move in on your Toyon berries as Christmas nears.



But bright green abounds, too. Even without much water, needlegrasses took an immediate cue from shorter days and cooler weather to begin putting out new green growth. They're impressive – some plants that were walked on during the rainless hot summer and seemed hardly more than a bump on the earth are suddenly green.

And the Coyote Brush (or Coyote Bush)– during the recent weeks of warm Fall weather, this quiet, unassuming shrub burst into quiet, unassuming bloom. Humans don't always take note of this shrub in bloom. The flowers are a nondescript yellow-green and are quite small. But squat downwind near a Coyote Brush in bloom and you'll be rewarded with a whiff of Autumn that keeps you sniffing for more. Surely it's that fine scent that attracts the hundreds of insects to partake of its nectar.

Fall is settling in gently this year. The Desert Willows, beautiful in all seasons, are losing their leaves, showing at last their gray trunks and twisting branches. Western Redbuds are beginning to drop their leaves also displaying a fine winter silhouette. Blue Curls are only a gray silhouette, too, but if you treasure the scent, break off a small piece and crumble it in your hand to bring back a memory of hot, summer days.



Coffeeberry (Rhamnus californica)

- Editor

RELATED PLANT AND FIELD TRIP ACTIVITIES

Sat., Nov. 24 9 a.m.	Table Mountain Discovery Trail or Table Top Walk the Discovery Train (an easy 3.7 miles) or hike to the top of the table (a moderate 6 miles)	Sierra Foothill Conservancy. Free. 559.855.3473 or www.sierrafoothill.org
Sat., Dec. 29 9 a.m.	Table Mountain Table Top There is a trail for most of the hike, about 6 miles round trip with an elevation gain of 1000 feet. Approx. 5 hours allowing for lunch at the top.	Sierra Foothill Conservancy. Free. 559.855.3473 or www.sierrafoothill.org
Sat., Jan. 12 9 a.m.	Table Mountain Smith Basin Strenuous, 8-mile round trip with 1000 ft. elevation to the top and 800 ft. into the basin. 6 hours including lunch in Smith Basin.	Sierra Foothill Conservancy. Free. 559.855.3473 or www.sierrafoothill.org

Newsletter



Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at nmtv@att.net. The deadline for contributions for the January newsletter is Friday, January 11, 2007.

E-mail newsletter recipients receive the extra page containing native plant photographs. If you wish to receive the newsletter electronically contact Helen Shaw.

We would like to publish photos you wish to share. You remain sole owner and are given credit or you can remain anonymous, as you wish. Photos will not be used for any other purpose. E-mail Thelma Valdez with photos or questions at nmtv@att.net.

Membership

October 2007

*New Members and Membership Renewals

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

Fresno: Mitchell, Davis

Thanks to all for your continuing support. Send membership corrections to Helen Shaw at helshaw@netptc.net.

The perfect holiday gift!

Do you have a friend or family member that has moved away from California and misses our unique vegetation? Or perhaps a new resident that doesn't realize the value of California natives.

A gift subscription of membership in CNPS would be a perfect gift. Remember that \$12.00 of the membership cost is tax deductible.

SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*President	Peggy Jones autumn_aspen@hotmail.com	559/897-9646 (h)
*Vice-President	Paul Mitchell paul30@comcast.net	559/638-2784 (h)
*Secretary	Marian Orvis mforvet@earthlink.net	559/226-0145 (h)
*Treasurer	Jeanne Larson jrjars@aol.com	559/243-0815 (h)
*Past President	Warren Shaw warshaw@netptc.net	559/855-4519 (h)
Membership	Helen Shaw helshaw@netptc.net	559/855-4519 (h)
Field trips / Programs	Jane Pritchard xxiii_xx@yahoo.com	559/323-8253 (h)
Newsletter Editor	Thelma Valdez nmtv@att.net	559/323-8962 (h)
Hospitality	Madeleine Mitchell madeleine43@comcast.net	559/638-2784 (h)
Horticulture	Joseph Oldham J.Oldham1@sti.net	559/658-7165 (h)
Education	Peggy Jones	(see President)
Rare Plant	John Stebbins johnst@cvip.net	559/297-0144 (h)
Plant Sale	Marian Orvis	(see Secretary)
Conservation Co-chairs	Jeanne Larson Joseph Oldham	(see Treasurer) (see Horticulture)
Directors at Large	Jim Seay Verna Arnest	jaseay@comcast.net vernaj@sti.net

The IRS considers dues in excess of \$12.00 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible.



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

- Student, Limited Income..... \$25
- Individual \$45
- Family, Group, or Library..... \$75
- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500

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

November-December 2007



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 CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT

Toyon

Heteromeles arbutifolia is also known as Christmas Holly or Christmas Berry because of the saw-like deep green leaves and abundant red berries that reach their peak color late in the year. Indeed, they make a beautiful, non-toxic Christmas floral arrangement.

Toyon is evergreen and has long been a favorite horticultural plant. It is long-lived, does well here in the Valley even in clay soils and little summer water. With better drainage and a water table within reach of the roots, Toyon in the wild has been known to grow tree-size (to 35 feet) and resemble live oaks. Typically it will reach 6-15 feet in the garden.

Cal Trans saw fit to use Toyon along stretches of the 168 Freeway east of Clovis and elsewhere. They are hard to miss this time of year because the fruit is bright red and hanging in large clusters. The fruit is

very tasty to a wide variety of birds and unless a cat is stationed nearby, you'll find little fruit on the ground.

Toyon is a far better plant to use than the exotic *pyracanthus*. It has many applications – as a single specimen, as a hedge, or as background foundation planting. It is tolerant of full sun as well as partial shade. With good drainage it will tolerate regular water.

In spring the masses of small white flowers provide nectar for many insects.

The plant is native to chaparral plant communities throughout much of California. Hollywood owes its name to this plant because they grow abundantly on the dry hills above the city.

You can enjoy their apple-cherry flavor much as Native Americans have by dry roasting them which removes the slightly

bitter taste. (You'll likely prefer an oven to an open fire.) Be sure they are at their peak ripeness and wash them well. A low heat (250°) and 30 to 40 minutes, turning them occasionally, should do it.





First row

- Coyote Bush blossom (*Baccharis pilularis*)
- California Buckwheat – dry blossoms (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
- Dr. Hurd Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos Dr. Hurd*)



Second row

- California Wild Grape (*Vitis californica*)
- Alkalai Sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*)

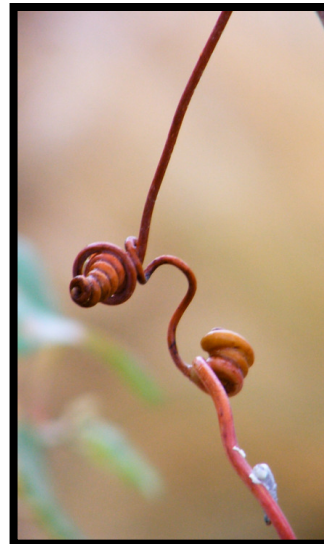
Third row

- Sulfur Buckwheat (*Eriogonum umbellatum*)
- Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)
- California Wild Grape (*Vitis californica*)



Fourth row

- Blue Grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*)
- Deergrass – 2 weeks post-pruning (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)
- Deergrass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)



**NOVEMBER
2007**
♦
SEQUOIA CHAPTER CNPS