

Carpenteria

THE NEWSLETTER

CNPS SEQUOIA CHAPTER



Nov./Dec. 2015

www.cnps-sequoia.org

California—a State of Emergency

All Californians have been dealing with our fourth year of drought and its effects on our communities. We all receive daily updates—audio, video, print. But in order really to understand the magnitude of this slow motion disaster, I recommend a personal visit to our foothills and mountain areas, many of which are within an hour or less driving time. The devastation is truly stunning. In his recent declaration of a state of emergency, Governor Brown gave some grim details:

- 22 million trees are dead and tens of millions more will likely die by the end of the year, victim to epidemic infestations of bark beetles, which have overwhelmed their normal defense mechanism.
- This die-off is unprecedented in modern history and is of such scale that it worsens wildfire risk across large regions of the state, presenting public safety risks from falling trees and worsening the threat of erosion across watersheds.

In Madera County, Cascadel Woods, east of North Fork, has a 90% mortality rate for Ponderosa Pines. In the Bass Lake area tree removal has been underway for months; 2500 dead trees have been cut down so far from areas that are a danger to power lines.

Governor Brown's Declaration will direct additional resources and personnel to help with fire protection and tree removal. Unfortunately trees are dying faster than they can be dealt with, so the hazards will be ongoing from dead trees falling or burning as they stand or are felled.

Data extrapolated from Mark Smith, Sierra Star; Rosemarie Smallcombe, website; State of California, Emergency Declaration



A view from Hwy 49, Mariposa County

A Bit of Good News

We did get some rain—and we will take of all we can get. Here is an observation from Thelma Valdez:

One week after an inch of rain and established California native perennials pushed out some new growth. Bam! Just a few weeks ago I was inspecting dry Purple Needlegrass clumps in the back field looking for a little bit of green. I found some, too, in the center of the clumps, as protected from summer's heat as possible.

Today I found 3" green leaves that had emerged from the base of some grasses hardly recognizable as a plant. I like so many California native plants, but there's something special about native grasses that I can't quite explain.

“Knowing trees, I understand the meaning of patience.

Knowing grass, I can appreciate persistence.”

-Hal Borland, *Countryman: A Summary of Belief*

Shaver Domes

--Jane Pritchard

This summer we explored the bare granite exposures above Shaver Lake. They can be accessed from Rock Creek Road and Markwood Meadow off Dinkey Creek Road or Tamarack Road off 168. Then a tangle of logging roads and OHV trails intertwine. The road straight ahead in Markwood Meadow leads to a good lunch dome with a view of Shaver Lake. We call this Mary's Dome.

Across Stevenson Creek and a deep ravine is another dome that extends up the mountain, called the Dome of Interest because its top can be seen from higher up (the bottom can't). One time Aaron, Susie, and I lunched at Mary's Dome and couldn't cross the ravine to the Dome of Interest. We did some hard traveling up along the ravine in forest with lots of fallen branches, then turned up to the right out of sight of the dome, crossed a small dirt road, and continued through brush to a granite outcrop (dubbed Susie's Place). From there we recognized a higher area we have visited numerous times and call our Favorite Spot because of its profusion of flowers and great views including Bald Mountain and Shaver Lake.

Facing west toward Shaver Lake, Bald Mountain is to the left, and a long bare area with some trees and large boulders along the side is down to the right. Aaron and I thought we could reach it from the north but searched all afternoon and haven't found it yet. It is dubbed the Inaccessible Dome. Everything looks so different from higher up, lower down, or beside an area. From above two domes may be visible. But lower down, there are smaller domes with ravines and forest between the two domes seen from above. An additional detriment is that your sense of direction is usually messed up and changes every few feet unless Shaver Lake or Bald Mountain can be seen. I always thought the compass on my walking stick didn't work right and realized it was correct - so guess who was wrong. Eileen has made so many GPS points, she has trouble thinking of new names and can't remember what the existing ones specify. She always takes a reading of where the car is parked. That has been very beneficial a few times.

A couple of weeks ago Aaron led Eileen and me on a hike with a "surprise" at the end.

We took the first road to the right inside Markwood Meadow and drove higher up. Rain had cleaned the air and left big puddles. Steam was rising everywhere and formed a low cloud. Bald Mountain appeared through a clearing to the right behind the rising mist. We hiked cross-country and explored the dome. Aaron had thought it was the Dome of Interest but our Favorite Spot was hidden behind the trees. So we figured our Dome of Interest was the dome on ahead across the forested ravine. So the "surprise" is now known as the Wrong Dome.

Eileen scouted around both days that weekend and found the Dome of Interest. The first day of autumn we drove up in 2 cars, parked one, and all rode in the other car another 2 miles. A beautiful walk through bare granite and trees led to the Dome of Interest - finally!! Mary's Dome was not visible but we thought we recognized Susie's Place down to the left across a ravine. Surprisingly, the first car we had left was only 100 yards from the Dome of Interest. We drove a ways then followed a trail through the woods to another road and went out on the area

where we had gone with Susie. So after exploring this spring and summer things connected together but some of the mystery and excitement of exploring the domes above Shaver evaporated. We

still haven't found the Inaccessible Dome though.



CHINA CREEK WORK DAY

--Warren Shaw

October 10th was an unseasonably warm and humid day, but the valiant crew of volunteers soldiered on. Some basal-bark sprayed invasive wild fig. Some struggled, with saws and loppers, to uncover a trail sign and walkthru gate swallowed by an Elderberry. Another searched for and located a second lost trail sign and cleared brush and weeds from others. One hacked and sawed the willows that threatened to take over the Park entrance, and a crew built and set cages around Valley Oak seedlings to protect them from future grazers.

Despite the weather, we accomplished a good deal, but there's a lot more to do, and we'll be working on it on Saturday, November 21 from 9:00 (winter starting time) to 12:00, and we'd really love to have you join us. It should be a beautiful brisk fall day in the Park.

And, immediately following the work party, we'll adjourn to the Blossom Trail Cafe for our annual "Thank-you" lunch, at which the Chapter expresses its gratitude to those who have supported the China Creek project in any way during the year. We hope you'll join us for that too.

To get there, take Kings Canyon/CA 180 east across Academy to Centerville. Follow Smith or Oliver south to Rainbow 1/4 mi. Turn south on Smith about 1/4 mi. to the Park gate. For more information call (559-451-1256) or email <warshaw1955@gmail.com>.

Ode to a Sugar Pine

--Warren Shaw

Since last spring a die-off of pines has marched slowly, but inexorably across the little mountain village of Shaver Lake. These are not the small closely spaced second growth trees that have been dying in great patches throughout the central Sierra. These are big old trees which have outlived the loggers and builders to reach great height and girth.

Recently two massive old sugar pines have died within a hundred yards of the front door of our little cabin. One was close to the pavement in front of a cabin which has born the Sign "Bend-o-the Road" for decades. On a rise and between pavement and a building, it's not too surprising it succumbed.

But the other, sited on SC Edison property near a drainage, far enough from the road not to be affected by traffic, was a shock. This old giant, at least 150 feet tall and 4 feet across at the ground, and, based on ring counts of similar trees, at least 150 years old, has survived many drought cycles in the past -- but not this one.



***Ramalina menziesii* Lace Lichen**
Shelly Benson, photo

From Jeanne Larson, Conservation Chair and Long-time member of the California Lichen Society

Lace Lichen (Ramalina menziesii)
California State Lichen

The California Lichen Society has advised that Lace Lichen is now the official California State Lichen. The formal announcement will be made in January 2016.

Most people know this light green, pendulous lichen as the "moss" on oak trees, all along the Pacific Coast from Santa Barbara to beyond San Francisco. Upon close observation, the "thallus" appears openly netted, hence the common name Lace Lichen. (A depauperate form, coarse netting and small thalli, can be found along the inner Coast Range.)

Early collectors, late 1880's, in the Sierra Nevada reported Lace Lichen collections from lower elevation sites. Today it is rare along the Sierra Nevada Range, most likely from the gradual change in the weather. Lace lichen likes moist conditions and mild temperatures.

The only inland areas where it may be found today, in any abundance, are probably along a branch of the Kaweah River in Three Rivers and on oak trees on ranches with permanent streams near trees in Tulare County.

Chapter News

A renewed interest in landscaping with native plants has brought with it renewed interest in chapter meetings. This was evident at several recent chapter events and the board is moving forward with plans for periodic chapter meetings. We are looking for a site that would be suitable; in addition we are discussing content and specifics like dates and time. We welcome any thoughts or suggestions from the membership and will share details as they evolve via future newsletters and our website. Contact information for board members is on the membership page.

Welcome!!

Our native plant sale connected over a hundred plant people with their new purchases of native plants; some also connected financially with the California Native Plant Society. Our table at Intermountain nursery's Harvest Festival also had some interested visitors. Among those who stopped by our information tables were five who left with memberships--four new members and one renewing member. Thanks and welcome to renewing member, Reagen O'Leary, and to new members Kimberly Bearden, Janet Carson, Michelle Smith and Linda Weiner.



November 14th Planting the native garden at Clovis Botanical Garden.

Location—945 N. Clovis Ave, Clovis, 93611-- just north of Alluvial Ave. Meet at 8AM for orientation; planting to follow. This will be a wonderful demonstration of what one can expect to see in their established native garden.

February 17th (tentative) Chapter meeting and Native Plant Seminar at Clovis Botanical Garden

A year ago September our seminar on landscaping with native plants was very well received and attended by members and a good number of non-members so there is obvious interest. The time, format, and presenters are still in the discussion phase but we expect the meeting to include some updates from previous presenters, who will share their progress in their native plant gardens. This meeting will welcome all interested plant people.

February 27 7:30AM-5PM--Master Gardeners' Conference

This conference is free to attendees and is at a new, improved, venue. The Airport Picadilly Inn in Fresno. Our chapter will have an information table.

March 4, 5, 6 Home & Garden Show at Fresno Fairgrounds.

Our Chapter's table will be in the Garden Pavilion. For this three-day event we need plenty of help. We made contact with many folks who stopped by to get a better look at Thelma's great photos of native plants, share gardening experiences, and get more information about native plants, CNPS, and Sequoia Chapter. This is a popular event and those of us who staff the information table for a couple of hours are rewarded with free admission, free parking, and shuttle service to/from the parking lot...such a deal!

CNPS is Hiring: Associate Director!

As you may have heard, CNPS is hiring an Associate Director! Please help us get the word out to find someone special who will help continue the great momentum we've built. Due to the great response so far, the hiring committee began reviewing applications early this month, so potential candidates should apply as soon as possible. Please distribute the job announcement via your e-mail lists, newsletters, and any other contacts you think would be good. Job announcement is available from Becky Reilly <breilly@cnps.org> This position will remain open until filled.

Membership

John & Michele LuValle

Thanks to new and renewing members.

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact John LuValle at 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 and click on the JOIN button.



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Next Newsletter: Jan. Feb. 2016

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw helshaw@gmail.com. The deadline for the next newsletter is Friday, Jan.6.



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: _____

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

Nov.Dec. 2015



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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

MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Madeleine Mitchell
Madeleine43@comcast.net



Apricot mallow © Calscape

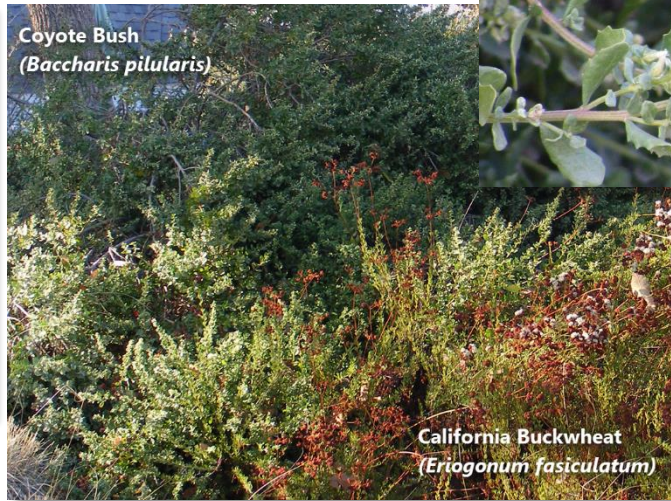
I've had most of my new "meadow" in the ground for about a year, although after the recent plant sale I added 5 new plants. So I've been deadheading and evaluating what I did right and of course, WRONG. First of all, I'm ashamed to put it into writing, but I planted the 1 gallon pots too close to each other. This is a common mistake and I should have known better by now. I didn't sketch it on paper and measure. Several of the plants, especially the *Sphaeralcea ambigua*, (apricot mallow) are larger than expected. This plant has bloomed all summer and is still blooming in November. It's over 5 foot tall and wide. So it covers other plants nearby. I should have planted 6 foot apart, not 3 ft. but they were so small. Lousy excuse so I'll try to relocate a couple of things when they are dormant in winter.

The Monarch butterfly bush, *Asclepias eriocarpa*, that I thought had died in August, surprised me by sending up another stem. The new plants I added after the CBG fall plant sale were: *Carpenteria californica*, (bush anemone), *Rhus ovata*, (sugarbrush), *Sisyrinchium bellum* (blue eyed grass), *Eriophyllum lanatum* 'Siskiyou' (wooly sunflower) and *Aster chilensis* "Purple Haze", which is blooming now. There is never a slow time for gardening as now the fall pruning begins. I have many old salvias that need some drastic pruning, they are woody and overgrown. There is always something that needs to be done and now that the weather is cooler I enjoy it all the more. I am most happy when I'm tending my garden.

Sequoia Chapter CNPS – November 2015



White Manzanita new growth
(*Atctostaphylos viscida*)



Coyote Bush
(*Baccharis pilularis*)



Beginning its fall bloom



Red Berry new growth
(*Rhamnus crocea*)



Purple needlegrass...returning
(*Stipa pulchra*)



Manzanita 'Lester Rowntree'
new growth

Photo credits:

Eileen Bennett: Domes on Markwood Road
Thelma Valdez: Plant photos

Domes on Markwood Road

