

**Lizard Tail Celebration
at China Creek Park!
Saturday, May 17
9 am - 3 pm**

Instead of a workday in May, we decided we should have a play day - a day to invite our membership and the general public to come to the Park to see what we've been doing and why we think China Creek is such a neat place.

plant raffle, and a little of what thousands of acres of Valley habitat used to look like. Great birding, too.

We'll have refreshments, guided tours, a native

a chance just to wander the park and see a



Why did we call this Lizard Tail Celebration? Well, that plant you see in the photo on the left is commonly known as Lizard Tail, Yerba Mansa, or Chivnish (to the Cahuilla native Americans). And we liked Lizard Tail! Its scientific name is *Anemopsis californica* and it should be in full bloom by May 17. It occurs naturally in numerous places within the Park.

Lizard Tail is common in lowland meadows and wet, alkaline places that are hot and sunny. It grows no taller than two feet with a cluster of many small flowers encircled by white bracts. The bracts look so much like petals that it appears to be a single cone-like flower instead of the complex arrangement of flowers that it is.

Besides the Lizard Tail, a variety of other plants should be in bloom such as the Blue Elderberry or simply be looking good such as the huge Sycamores at the back of the Park.

To get to China Creek Park, take King's Canyon/180 east from Fresno. Continue a few miles beyond Academy to Smith Avenue (just before the Centerville School) Turn right on

Smith (Centerville School will be on your left), and continue down to the park gate.

It should be a beautiful spring day. The China Creek Volunteers will be "hosting" from 9am to 3pm. We hope you can make it.

China Creek Update

Warren Shaw

Our Earth Day/Workday was quiet, with a small but dedicated crew spreading chips on the oak woodland loop section of the trail. Hank Urbach brought his tractor, mowed several areas, and experimented with running the mower over the parts of the trail where mulch had been spread earlier by the Vulcan crew. This process seems to refine the mulch a little and even up the surface, making it more easily walked and saving considerable hand labor. Thanks Hank.

We noted blossoms on the blackberries, and the earliest signs of bloom on the *Anemopsis*; we're hoping, of course, it will be in full bloom by May 17th for our (First Annual?) Lizard Tail Celebration (see above).



CARPENTERIA
Newsletter of
The Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

May 2008

General Meetings:

March., May, September., October.

Board Meetings:

November, January, February, April.

Observations

At 2000 feet, despite the brown hilltops, there are still lots of blooms to see. The Shaws have noted two species of *Clarkia* appearing the last few days of April and earlier in that same week saw the first Mariposa Lilies of the year. Buckeyes have "candles" up, but aren't showing any white blossoms yet. Blue Oaks are in full leaf now, with their characteristic blue coloration.

In the lower elevations, warmer weather means the transition toward summer has begun. If you want to see the flowers of late spring you'll need to visit places above 2000 feet. And you should!

This doesn't mean, however, that there isn't much to appreciate about this transition to a slower part of the year. Sages are in full bloom, as is Harvest Brodiaea. Desert Willow blossoms are gearing up for a summer of blossom. And driving around towns one still sees a lot of California poppies in bloom.

Pocket Herbarium

Here's an idea to take along when you go on a local hike or other activity.

Cut 3 or 4 pieces of corrugated cardboard 4" x 6". Thin corrugated material, if stiff, saves space. Cut enough 4x6" newsprint, B&W, (classified is best) to make a pack of about 3/4" to 1". The stack can be secured with two, 1/4" wide rubber vegetable bands (as in \$1.99/lb asparagus).

If you don't have time to key on spot or aren't carrying a key or large plant press this pocket herbarium will hold a flower and leaf, and along with enough notes (include a pencil stub and small note pad in your gear) for you to key it out later.

Photo Contest!

A photo contest has been added as part of the CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference. Prizes will be awarded to first, second, and third places, as well as the first three runners up.

The subject is "California Native Plants". Photos must be taken in California (or California Floristic Province) and feature plants native to the state. Images may be species specific macro shots, wide angle landscape photos, or pictures of people or animals interacting with the natural environment of California. Photos may be of- but are not limited to- rare or common plants, flowers, trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, bryophytes - surprise us!

To learn full entry details, visit <http://cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2009/photos.php> or email Stacey Flowerdew at sflowerdew@cnps.org.

Resource Conservation District's Earth Day Event at Intermountain Nursery

Our table at this event was in a perfect location at the Nursery and the weather was beautiful. This was the first time this event was held so although traffic was not as heavy as at other events at Intermountain Nursery, there was good attendance and we had a steady flow through the table area with many local foothill residents interested in native plant gardening.

Horticulture

Native plant gardening in California's Floristic Province is so different than in the Midwest, the East, and even in some wetter parts of California.

Here's a quote from Louise Lacey, who has written for many years about native plant gardening: "Plainly described, a Mediterranean climate has rain in the Winter and no rain in the Summer. Such a climate is rare on our planet. In addition to parts of California, it only exists in some places in the Mediterranean, in South Africa, and in parts of Chile and Australia. Those places have plants that are adapted to at least six months of dryness." (Louise Lacey's wonderful articles can be found at <http://www.growingnative.com>)

Native plant gardening here in Central California is even more interesting because in some areas within our chapter's reach, our rainfall is that of a desert. But we don't live in the desert. Our local plant life has adapted to our local weather, water, and soil conditions. The closer you can get to establishing local native plant communities in your landscape, the more you feel in tune with Central California.

One might compare it to moving to another country where you don't speak the native language. I recall visiting Hamburg, Germany many years ago with a friend from England who had lived there for over four years and spoke excellent German. Much of her social life, however, was spent with English expatriates. We drank beer at an English pub and visited restaurants mostly frequented by Englishmen.

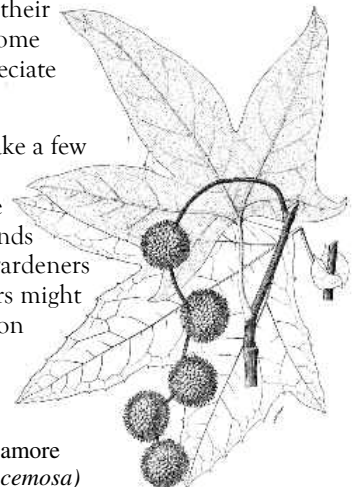
Because of her unconscious isolation, there was so much of Germany, and particularly Hamburg that I (and apparently she) never experienced even though it was all around us. She liked the German people and she loved living in Hamburg. But the draw of the familiar was too strong.

For many Central California residents, the familiar plants are those provided in nurseries that sell mostly plants from non-Mediterranean climates. We're familiar with plants we see in our neighbor's gardens, in catalogs, in magazines, and in new developments. Because California was settled by people from other areas, these plant ideas are well-rooted (pardon the pun) even for those who might be fourth generation Californians. California educational institutions rarely focus their future horticulturalists and botanists on the unique adaptations of these plants.

There's hope, though. Increasingly there is an interest in native plants and this might eventually translate to more natives in nurseries, more educational effort placed on native plants. And when water becomes expensive and hits homeowners in the pocketbook and in their stressed non-drought tolerant plantings, native plants and their unique beauty and amazing adaptations come into focus.

Where does one turn to find examples? To begin an education? To help your landscape become integrated into our local weather and water patterns? There are many books and Web sites. A good beginning is the CNPS Web site on horticulture (<http://cnps.org/cnps/horticulture/>). You can find native plant nurseries on that site and much, much more. Don't let yourself be overwhelmed. You can start slowly by simply reading about natives and looking at photographs. Let yourself get used to photographs of how others have integrated natives into their landscape. You'll like some, you'll dislike others. For some persons it takes a while to see beyond a flower and appreciate more than just color.

Like my friend who spoke excellent German, it might take a few more years for her to feel comfortable around Germans most of the time. I hope she is now at that point. I like to imagine that she has probably kept some English friends and still goes to the English pub sometimes. Like her, gardeners might want to keep some of their familiar plants. Others might more quickly immerse themselves in natives. Each person must decide for him or herself. The important thing is to begin.



Western Sycamore
(*Platanus racemosa*)

Conservation

We should all be thinking about ways to conserve water. In the garden, change from sprinklers or furrow irrigation to drip-style micro-sprays. There are many choices and improvements in landscape irrigation on the market. Water meters are finally coming to Fresno, starting 2009. Another good reason to be environmentally conscious about our garden watering, when needed.

Membership

April 2008

If you aren't sure when your membership needs to be renewed, check your mailing label. The month and year of renewal is right after your name. For example 0908 = renewal September, 2008.

Email recipients of the newsletter can get that information from membership chair, Helen Shaw, <helshaw@netptc.net>

*New Members and Membership Renewals

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

Fresno: Buada, Judd, Larson, Latimer, O'Leary, *Paul, Peterson, Phillips, Pryor, Tietz, Tui-Teli

Thanks to all for your continuing support. Send membership corrections to Helen Shaw at helshaw@netptc.net. The IRS considers dues in excess of \$12.00 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible.

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Newsletter



Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at nmtv@att.net. The deadline for the Summer newsletter is Friday, July 4, 2008.

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

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

California Native Plant Society
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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

May 2008



CALIFORNIA NATIVE
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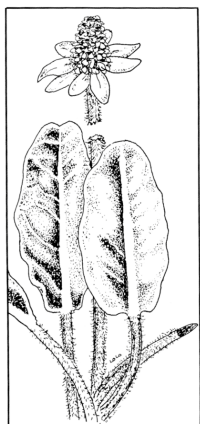
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Dedicated to the Preservation of the California Native Flora.
For a membership brochure call Helen Shaw at 559/855-4519.
CNPS Web site: www.cnps.org.

FEATURED CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT

Native Plants of China Creek Park

The plants featured this month are a few of those to be seen at China Creek Park. See the first page of the newsletter for details on our event there on May 17!



Verbena monensis

Lizard tail
(*Anemopsis californica*)



California Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*)



Valley Oak
(*Quercus lobata*)



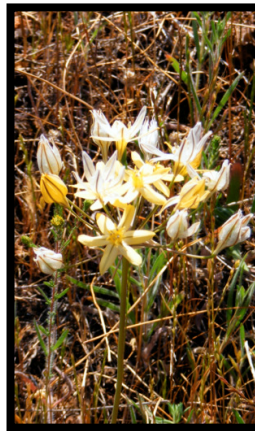
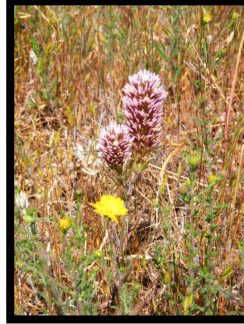
Button Bush
(*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)



Blue Elderberry
(*Sambucus mexicana*)



MAY 2008
★
**SEQUOIA
CHAPTER CNPS**



*Harvest Brodiaea and
California Meadow
Barley*

*Photographs
from Tivy
Mountain –
April 2008*

*Photos from Joshua Tree
Nat'l Park*

