



Wildflower tour, habitat restoration, plant exchange, Earth Day.

For a group with a small number of active members, our Sequoia Chapter has sponsored or participated in quite a few events this past month. Warren Shaw's China Creek restoration group has met faithfully for years--11 months of 12. Jane Pritchard led a scouting expedition prior to the wildflower trip. Marian Orvis staffed our table at the annual Water-wise Plant Exchange and at the Earth Day Event. Madeleine Mitchell wore two hats: assisting Marian at the plant exchange and, with husband Paul, working at the Earth Day celebration. Reports are below and following. To assist with or join any activity, contact a board member. Contact information is on page 5.



CHINA CREEK REPORT

It was a beautiful – if warm – day at the park for our April work party. It started with a bobcat sighting (neighbor/member Hank Urbach says there is a family of three). We worked in the southeast section, looking for Yellow Star Thistle and other exotic thistles to kill. We found, and dug, several large patches of Milk Thistle, mostly under big old Valley Oaks, one of which we noted sadly appears to be dying.



YST—enemy #1

We also found some small, but dense, patches of YST between the road and the creek at the east and south borders of this area, which we spot-sprayed with selective herbicide.

While we hate using chemicals, we have to admit that, with all the control methods we have tried: hand grubbing and pulling, mowing, over-planting, and grazing, it has not been until we began the judicious use of herbicide that we have felt we were making significant progress toward reducing the YST infestation to the point that our little crew of hardworking volunteers could keep it at bay by hand. Now, we're beginning to broaden our horizons to include some of the other enemies on our "Ten Most Wanted Weeds" list.

We also inspected our fence and noted some repairs needed, so plan to address those in May. We'll continue to pursue our spring program of locating, grubbing and spot-spraying YST etc. – most likely in the north section of the Park – provided the cattle have been rotated out of that area as we expect.

The Park is always beautiful and interesting, but never more so than in the spring. If you would like to be added to our no-obligation "Willing-to-be-Notified" email list, please contact Warren Shaw at <warshaw@netptc.net> or 559-855-4519. 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. The next work days will be Saturday, May 26, and Saturday, June 16.

Wildflower Preview - April 26, 2012

Jane Pritchard

The clouds looked ominous so I pulled the seat back forward to retrieve my umbrella and put it in the back of my truck with the other equipment to be transferred to the Shaw's car. During that time the 12-ounce container of coffee had fallen over and spilled in and under the seat. Coffee dries up and leaves a good smell but having spent the time to make it and then not having the coffee to drink put me into a foul mood. Of course, a lot of drivers that morning were dumb and very irritating. Light rain started just as the shops at our meeting place at Academy and Shaw came into view. Helen and Warren pulled in a couple minutes later. They got me another cup of really great coffee at the Johnny Qwik. My mood was back to normal by the time we turned onto Belmont.

At the pullout where the river rages on the right side and wavy serpentine rocks rise up on the left, blazing star and the crassula *Dudleya cymosa* = liveforever had just begun to bloom. Pink buckwheat, inksplots with dark purple buds at the tip and yellow jewelflowers along the stem, very light yellow wallflowers, dirty or caterpillar phacelia, native thistle, clarkia, pretty face, and bunches of needlegrass covered the rocks. Common monkeyflower grew at the sides of a currently waterless waterway. *Pseudobahia heermanii* and the poppy *Escholzia caespitosa* (petals tightly closed) bloomed here in addition to every open, south or east-facing location all the way to Trimmer Springs. Tobacco tree (South American) with yellow Gabriel's trumpet flowers and the astringent woolly mullein = *Verbascum thapsus* from Eurasia with pretty yellow radial flowers on a solitary stalk per plant were on the riverbank.

Two-thirds of the way up the hill out of the valley, the candelabras on buckeye trees were white – almost ready to bloom. Manzanitas had formed little green apples. Four different lupines grew here. The white lupine is *Lupinus*

microcarpus var. *densiflorus* = chick lupine. Spider lupine has skinny leaves like spider legs and bright blue to magenta petals. *Lupinus bicolor* = miniature lupine has blue and white petals. The bush lupines bloom earlier at this elevation and had seed pods. Rosy clover, tomcat clover, blue dicks, Ithuriel's spears, goldback ferns, madia, and wild cucumber also made their first appearance on this trip.

An open, south facing, rocky area overlooking Pine Flat Reservoir was thick with popcorn flower. Numerous small claytonias with linear usually pink leaves, young soap plants, and buckwheats with immature green flower stems reaching for the sky were at this location. White mariposa lilies and more pseudobahia and blazing stars were along the roadside to the next stop.

At the photo op on the east side of the hill overlooking the lake, poppies cover a rise on the lake side of the road. A bush lupine still had blossoms. Red paint brush popped out up where grass grows above the bare dirt and rocks. Many poison oak bushes and several flowers previously encountered on this trip were here.

A shaded area toward the bottom of a north-facing hill has a violet that looks the same as one on Black Mountain = *Viola purpurea* subsp. *Quercetorum*. Two petals are purple on back. Sulfur pea = *Lathyrus sulfureus*, pink fairy lantern = globe lily, shooting star, bedstraw, redbud with a few blooms hanging on, Ithuriel's spear, baby blue eyes, and miner's lettuce dotted the roadsides back up the hill to a Sierran gooseberry bush = *Ribes roezlii* which was loaded with immature spiny fruit.

We scarfed down a great lunch at the Shaws' after our hard morning of looking at beautiful flowers and spectacular views. Several quail, finches, hummingbirds, a dove, and other birds pecked at seeds and sipped nectar just outside their kitchen and dining area. On the way back to my truck the sight of spice bush with a few bright red blooms capped off a beautiful, fun, if rainy, day.



Left to right:

**Indian paint brush
Spider lupine
Blazing star**

Windshield Wildflower Tour – April 28

Helen Shaw

After being washed out—literally—from the April 14th tour and verifying that most who had signed up would be able to attend on the 28th, Warren and I proceeded. Knowing that this would be late in the season, we were hesitant but, as you see from Jane's report, there was plenty to see, including blooms previous tours have been too early to see, e.g. blazing star, Indian paintbrush, and Mariposa lily. Our preview Trip on Thursday was a cold and rainy one but things had dried out and warmed up nicely by Saturday. Our group was just about the right size (11 participants in 4 cars) for traveling in a caravan and pulling off to the roadside in safety. Our group was comprised of those with native plant experience that ranged from professional to ones self-described as seldom venturing beyond urban boundaries. It is always fun to make this trip with such diversity: we always learn or re-learn that "the more we look, the more we see."

Earth Day Celebration – April 28

Marian Orvis

It was cold and windy with a threat of rain. Again the rain gods were kind to us. We had to provide our own tables and chairs. The CNPS table was shared with Fresno Audubon Society. I also had a table for Tree Fresno. Set up was 7 a.m. and the event ended at 2 p.m. Lots of food, mostly good music throughout and all vendors supported the green environment.

Although folks I spoke with said the attendance was "great," I wasn't so sure; perhaps it was the remote location of our tables on the West side of the property. It didn't appear that the other vendors in the same location had much activity either. The rest of the area appeared to have greater attendance. Madeleine and Paul Mitchell were helpful in providing me relief even though they were there with other organizations.

All-in-all, thinking about next year, I would vote that we continue to do this outreach.

Editor's addendum...perhaps with a request for a different location.

Water-wise Plant Exchange – May 5

This annual event at the Fresno State Horticulture Greenhouses is a free give and take of drought-resistant plants, sponsored by the City of Fresno Water Conservation Division.

Marian Orvis also represented our chapter at this event and sends her report:

Although Jeanne Larson was unable to attend, she did supply a generous amount of Bay leaves and Redbud seeds for giveaway at our table. She also sent some succulents, a couple of cacti, blue-eyed grass and sage for the exchange table. Madeleine Mitchell pitched in with an occasional respite from her Master Gardeners' table.

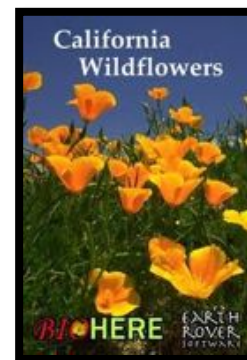
It was a cool morning, the last of the early morning temperatures in the 40's. There was a constant breeze, which will not abate for the season until after graduation in June. We were fortunate to have a table in a filtered location on the West side of the area rather than total shade from 8 a.m. - 12 noon. A good crowd of 100-150 people attended, including many children. Many of our handouts vanished including one SHARES card and one purchased wildflower poster. (We have plenty of SHARES cards and posters for those interested.)

All in all, the City of Fresno Water Conservation crew made this a minimum effort for vendors by providing tables, chairs and overhead shade for all participants. Next year will be the fifth for this event. I vote we continue to participate.



Is there an app for that? Probably.

As our phones get smarter and smarter, the quality and quantity of apps increase. Owing to the absence of a cell signal in our neighborhood, your editors' phones are still pretty dumb, but we have noticed apps that make us a bit wistful. A visit to the iTunes app store brought us to some guides by EarthRover Software that include Wildflowers of California, Sierra Nevada, Death Valley and Joshua Tree NP; along with Maps of John Muir Trail, Yosemite, and Sequoia/Kings Canyon NP.



Observations

--Jeanne Larson

Garden stunner. My Frosty blue Ceanothus, now about 6'x6', was covered with blooms and the compliment of Bird's eye gilia below was striking. Mexican sage, a normal fall bloomer, is about only two thirds its normal height and in full bloom. Perhaps our early warm spell confused it. It is cut back each winter to near ground level but continues to spread in diameter. Finally, I have a few blooms of yellow eyed grass. Its blue eyed grass cousin has been a sea of blue under a Chitalpa tree (cross between Desert willow and Catalpa).

--Madeleine Mitchell

In May the heucheras are blooming, the Salvia "Bee's Bliss" continues to bloom and the poppies are just about finished. Rosa californica begins to bloom as the Carpenteria californica finishes.

--Warren Shaw

In the foothills, grasses are finally beginning to brown; most Blue Oaks are "blue," and many of this year's rather sparse blooms are fading – though there are some nice patches of Farewell to Spring glowing prettily; other Clarkias are blooming also, as well as lots of Mariposa Lily in the Serpentine areas. Buckeyes and elderberries are just beginning to reach full bloom; spicebush too. Curly-leafed soaproot is beginning to push up stalks and should be blooming soon, and doveweed and milkweed are up and growing.



Mariposa lily

--Thelma Valdez

Buffalograss is not a California native but it has become increasingly popular as a lawn alternative, and with good reason. It requires even less water than Bermuda grass and far less need for mowing. It's native to the Great Plains and is certainly less invasive than Bermuda grass. It's a less is more kind of thing. If you haven't read about the UC Verde Buffalograss, you must look into it as an option.

Many years ago I planted buffalograss from seed. This was before the UC developed their version of seedless buffalograss. Today "my" buffalograss produces its precious miniature blossoms as part of its seed-producing cycle (see photo). Full disclaimer -- I have not developed the allergies that seem to plague so many denizens of the Central Valley. I am also enthralled with the cycle of life so I take great pleasure in watching the grass bloom. The seed heads are part of that cycle and I like them. Yeah, I know I've moved way beyond that desire for an outdoor green carpet. For me, plants are now all about life and I'm lucky to not live under an HOA or have neighbors who care.



buffalo grass in bloom

So if you are considering buffalo grass as a lawn alternative, don't forget that you can plant it from seed and get a real seed-producing, insect-loving lawn. For the right combination of person, location, and lifestyle, it's a treat.

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.



SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*President	open	
*Vice-Pres.	Paul Mitchell paul30@comcast.net	559/638-2784 (h)
*Secretary	Marian Orvis mforvet@comcast.net	559/226-0145 (h)
*Treasurer	Jeanne Larson jrjars@aol.com	559/243-0815 (h)
Membership	Thelma Valdez nmtv@unwiredbb.com	559/323-8962 (h)
Field Trips	Jane Pritchard xxiii_xx@yahoo.com	559/765-9954 (h)
Newsletter Editors	Warren & Helen Shaw warshaw@netptc.net helshaw@netptc.net	559/855-4519 (h)
Hospitality	Madeleine Mitchell madeleine43@comcast.net	559/638-2784 (h)
Horticulture	open	
Education	Warren Shaw	(See Newsletter)
Rare Plant	John Stebbins johnst@mail.fresnostate.edu	559/297-0144 (h)
Plant Sale	Marian Orvis	(see Secretary)
Conservation	Jeanne Larson	(see Treasurer)
Directors at Large	Jim Seay Verna Arnest Michele LuValle	jnjseay@gmail.com vernaj@sti.net luvalle@mcn.org

Another opportunity to hike with Jane

Each year Jane Pritchard leads a hike and cleanup of Tollhouse Rock. It's a great way to take in a cooler altitude (for those in the Valley) and help cleanup a beautiful place. Contact Jane if you'd like to join.
(xxiii_xx@yahoo.com)

Next Newsletter ~ July/August 2012

Send newsletter corrections, contributions or suggestions to Helen Shaw helshaw@netptc.net
The deadline for the newsletter is Friday, July 6.



Sequoia Chapter, CNPS
thanks Derrel's for their support



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
- Marinosa I. ilv\$1500

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

May-June 2012



CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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

MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Madeleine Mitchell



How time flies in the spring. I took this photo of one of the Pacific coast hybrids that I've had for years. This is the darker one and I'll include another photo of the paler one.

It's already been over a month and they've stopped blooming and need to be divided. I'll bring starts of each one to the next CNPS board meeting. Be there if you want one.

I probably have had them for at least 5 years so don't remember if someone brought them to a meeting or if a speaker had them for sale. But I do enjoy their bloom for several weeks in April each year.

Ed. note: Board meetings are open to all members. The next one is Sunday, May 20. For details, email helshaw@netptc.net





MAY 2012
◆
SEQUOIA CHAPTER CNPS

Counter clockwise from top

- Harvest brodiaea
- Rosa California - wild rose
- Carpenteria californica
- Trichostema lanatum – woolly blue curls

