



CONTENTS

1	Member Report
2-3	In Memoriam
4	Classes and Events
5	Chapter Contacts
6	Member Report (continued)

MEMBER REPORT

-- Leslie Lipton

Caring for California native plants during extreme heat

(First published in YLP Life on August 21, 2020, the Yosemite Lakes Park Newsletter. Written for Coarsegold area, but principles apply elsewhere.)

How do we care for California native plants during these blazing hot days?

The answer is to keep doing what we always do — once a week deep watering of first-summer plants, along with overhead showers — adding daily observation and intervention for signs of stress.

When CA native plants are less than a year old, and experiencing their first summer, we treat them as newborns — responding to nonverbal messages with caring and disciplined intervention when needed. If this is the first summer for your California natives, this will be tricky depending on your individual plants. You may lose plants, especially if you planted them only a few months ago. But best practices will minimize these losses.

Best practices do's and don'ts

DO'S

DO mulch three inches deep for at least a foot radius around each plant. This mitigates the effects of the heat and drought;

DO continue deep watering once per week, as early in the morning as possible;

DO continue to shower plants with a hose briefly, to dust off and hydrate leaves, more often than usual, every few days if possible;

DO walk your garden each day. If a plant is wilting (the leaves have softened up), give it a shower. If it doesn't perk up in a few hours, deep water it early in the morning.

DON'T's

DON'T water everything more just because it is extra hot. More water is not a remedy in general for drought-tolerant California native plants during heat, and can be a death sentence;

DON'T water your native treasures at all, including gray pine, manzanita, buckbrush, and oaks;

DON'T give up in this blazing heat, throw your hands in the air and be like, "whatever...it's too freaking hot and these plants are giving me mixed messages." I hear you.



-Hummingbird Sage wilting in the hot sun-



-Same plant later, after dousing with brief shower-

IN MEMORIAM

Three Messages in Honor of Jeanne Larson

#1

--**Thelma Valdez**

One person's remembrances of another person are singular and by definition, one-sided. Of course, we are all many-faceted and Jeanne Larson was no exception. Adjectives are the easiest to come by. Jeanne was opinionated, unafraid to speak her mind, highly intelligent, logical, down-to-earth, loveable, straightforward, kind, generous, loved cats, and did not suffer fools, lightly or otherwise.

Jeanne was an early member of the Sequoia Chapter, joining shortly after its inception, which may have been around 1974. The goals of the California Native Plant Society coincided enough with her personal connection to California landscapes that she took leadership roles in the Sequoia Chapter, holding many board member and committee chair positions. Until a couple of years ago, she was the conservation chairperson and did not hesitate to write letters to the Fresno Bee about local conservation issues. Oh, and she was also treasurer until three years ago when at age 92 she found it difficult to navigate the challenges of the number crunching involved in detailed financial chapter reports to the state. We should all be so sharp at 92 years of age.



The outdoors were her real love. Her most recent working years were at the San Joaquin Experimental Range located in the Sierra foothills near Coarsegold. Jeanne readily talked about her years there and what she learned about cattle and how commercial livestock can be part of the natural ecosystem of the foothills.

She shifted to a smaller outdoors once she retired and turned her Fresno back yard into a mix of California natives, citrus, and a few non-natives, but never a lawn! The front and side yards were also reshaped and filled with California natives. Some years back she finally had to remove a Matilija Poppy that she planted. It had become gigantic and beautiful; unfortunately, it was threatening to never let go of the trash dumpster.

If you only knew a few of Jeanne's curmudgeonly aspects, you knew very little of her. She is far better to be remembered as the interesting and caring individual she was.

#2

--**Warren Shaw**

I've always heard that Jeanne was a Charter member of the Sequoia Chapter. It has been difficult to confirm that because there are so few people still with us who were there. In any case, Jeanne was a vital and active part of the Chapter's life from its inception to her death from a fall at her home, where she still lived independently at 95 until last week.



According to her son Jeff, Jeanne was born and raised in San Diego and was the first woman ever to graduate from UCLA with a degree in subtropical horticulture. Unable to make a career in that area expertise, she got a Master's in range management. She worked for many years at the San Joaquin

Experimental Range in Madera County. She was an actual California native, and had a lifelong fascination with California native plants.

Perhaps through her range management work, she was acquainted with Ruth McKenzie, and was very influential in getting Ruth to donate her large foothill ranch property to the Foothill Conservancy, with the understanding that it would continue to be used for cattle—cows and calves. This was the basis of the now vast area under the Conservancy's control. When the Conservancy moved from a cow/calf operation to raising steers for grass-fed beef, Jeanne vehemently disagreed, and never abandoned her outspoken opposition, believing it degraded the land.

One of her greatest influences in the continuing life of the Chapter was her interest in China Creek Park, an undeveloped Fresno County Park, consisting of 120 acres of Valley Oak woodland and savannah near Centerville. After a report to the County Council by Ted Ruffner in 1997, which drew attention to mismanagement and abuse, especially overgrazing, in the Park, Jeanne became interested in the potential in such a property for native plant restoration, preservation, and public education. The Sequoia Chapter was somewhat reluctant to take on such an imposing project, but Jeanne persisted with characteristic determination, and in 2004 a steering committee was formed, including Jeanne, and the Project has been a significant part of the Chapter's world ever since.

Throughout Jeanne's long and active life, she was a powerful voice for California's natural habitat, especially flora, and she will be missed.



-China Creek with cattle-

Photo by Laura Castro

#3

--**Laura Castro**

I haven't known Jeanne for as long as some of the other Sequoia Chapter members, but I had developed what I felt was a bond with Jeanne (at least on my end), which was cemented by a beautiful little desert willow that she gifted me and then gave me welcome advice about; by our mutual interest in each other's pets; by her lemon tree that produced more delicious lemons than she knew what to do with and that I most willingly volunteered to take home or give away; by her infrequent but interesting life stories; and, of course, by her lovely contributions to the newsletter.

Most recently, with the Covid-19 situation, I would check in on her periodically to see if she needed anything (it wasn't often enough). As independent as she was, still driving in daylight and all, she rarely took me up on my offers. I admired her strength, her intelligence, her tenacity, her dogmatic self, and last but not least, her passion for integrity in the field of conservation.

Despite her age, the news of her accident earlier this month was a shock, and the news of her death, which took some time to reach the Sequoia Chapter, was deeply saddening. Given her chutzpah, I was whole-heartedly expecting her to pull through, despite indications that she would not. The loss produces another sensation besides lament: a disquieting nudge, an awareness to make communication urgent and habitual (but natural and nonintrusive) — perpetually intact —with those we discover could reserve, or already possess, a meaningful place in our lives.

Jeanne, may you rest in peace.



Upcoming Classes and Events

•September 23, Bloom Where You Are Planted -Wednesday, 7:00pm

Virtual event sponsored by Gateway Science Museum

- One of seven weekly talks through Zoom in the Museum's Museum Without Walls.
- Presentation will be prerecorded, but live question and answer session will occur afterward.
- Linnea Hanson will speak about how she became interested in plants, the work she did in the Plumas National Forest, and her observations the effects of climate change on wildflowers.
- Linnea will describe her involvement with Northern California Botanists and Friends of Chico State Herbarium and will introduce the audience to some of the rare plants on the Plumas National Forest.

Meeting Information:

<https://www.csuchico.edu/gateway/education/for-lifelong-learners/mwow.shtml>

•September 23, Rainwater Harvesting and Rainscaping Strategies for Healthy Watersheds -Wednesday, 6:45pm

Virtual event sponsored by the Redbud Chapter

- Presentation will include best practices for rainfall bio-retention strategies such as how to store and harvest rainwater and strategies to slow, spread and sink rainfall & storm water runoff.
- Learn about rain gardens, bio-swales, berms and basins, and appropriate native plants for these ecosystems.



Meeting Information:

<https://chapters.cnps.org/redbud/2020/07/23/september-23rd-2020/>

•October 27-30, Cal-IPC 2020 Symposium Online: Recovery and Resilience -Tuesday-Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm

Zoom Event

- Theme: Confronting Fire, Weeds, and Forest Pests.

Information and Registration: <https://www.cal-ipc.org/resources/symposium/>

•October 16-17, Water-wise Plant Sale -Friday, 12:00pm-4:00pm & Saturday, 9:00am-1:00pm

Location: Clovis Botanical Gardens (CBG), 945 N. Clovis, CA 93611



- Masks and physical distancing will be required.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the CBG.
- CBG members get 10% discount on plants.

Cost to enter: Free

Information: <https://clovisbotanicalgarden.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FallSale-2020-flyer-full-Copy.pdf>

•CNPS Sequoia Chapter - California Native Plant Sale

- Date(s) to be determined.
- Will likely be an online sale event, with pick up at CBG.
- We will keep you posted.



•December 10-11, Poaceae I -Thursday-Friday, 8:30am-5:00pm

- Poaceae is the state's second most diverse plant family after Asteraceae. Workshop provides a better understanding of this species-rich family.
- Will be instructed in detail on the vegetative and reproductive features of grasses.
- Will learn aspects of anatomy, physiology, and ecology. Special attention will be given to difficult couplets and taxa.
- Will also learn how to identify common genera by using diagnostic characteristics.
- Some previous plant identification experience required.

•December 12-13, Poaceae II -Saturday-Sunday, 8:30am-5:00pm

- Advanced grass workshop is for those that have taken the introductory workshop or have experience with grass identification.
- Offers a variety of California genera and species for study, more practice with keying, and more genera to learn.
- Participants are encouraged to have samples of grasses to share with the group.

Poaceae I & II each cost: \$350 members/\$380 public

Information for these courses:

<https://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/workshops/>

Membership

Thanks to new and renewing members.

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact Cherith Merson at echerith@gmail.com.

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.

Next Newsletter: October 2020

Send newsletter suggestions to Laura Castro at lacastror@outlook.com. The deadline for submissions to the next newsletter is **Friday, September 25, 2020.**



SEQUOIA CHAPTER CONTACTS

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Secretary	vacant	
Rare Plants Coordinator	vacant	
President	vacant	
Hospitality	vacant	
Horticulture	vacant	



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, Fixed Income \$25
- Individual \$50
- Plant Lover \$120
- Supporter \$500
- Patron \$1,000
- Benefactor \$2,500
- Steward \$5,000
- Guardian \$10,000

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

September 2020

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

c/o Laura Castro ♦ PO Box 414 ♦ Fresno, CA 93708

MEMBER REPORT (CONTINUED)

Caring for California native plants during extreme heat

Some perspective

In our **Native Plants Live Here** group, we learned that California native plants have a superpower, developed over thousands of years, that allows them to thrive in heat and drought. The climate here in YLP, hot and dry in the summer, is their comfort zone. Our native treasures – gray pine, manzanita, buckbrush, and oaks – accept and even require these conditions. It is a mistake to water those mature plants during our area's regular periods of heat and drought. But our young native plants? They need support till mature.

This past Sunday, I visited our native plant garden at the Equestrian Center at 9:30AM. It was very hot, and had been for days. I checked for drought stress on each plant, and found two small sages that were wilting. After a deep watering, they perked up and will be fine for at least a week or two. Even in this extreme heat.



-Brandegee's Sage and Celestial Blue Sage,
watered twice this summer-

This is the hardest time of the year, most years, for native plant gardening in California. Plants are dry and stressed, and so are we. But if we accept nature's 365-day rhythm, over time we come to enjoy and even cherish this regenerative cycle. We accept the drought, and dream of bounteous rain.