



Native Plant Garden Sign

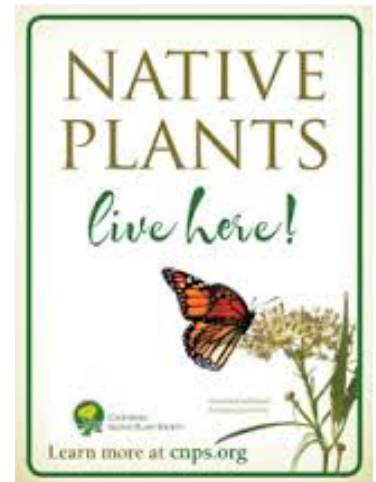
NEW RELEASE!!!

If you are a gardener and have native plants in your garden, this is the sign for you! Show off your commitment to California native plants by displaying this beautiful 9”x 12” full-color aluminum sign on a wall - or attach it to a garden stake. “Plant” the sign amongst your natives to let passers-by know that you are part of the growing community of ecologically advanced gardeners.

The general public will benefit by seeing your native plants in a garden settings and they will be encouraged to learn more by linking them to www.cnps.org/gardening where they can get information about the “**3 Ps**” of gardening: **Plant Local---**Plant Light---

Plant Well.

To purchase: www.cnps.org/shop



SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, March 28, 2015
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

5th Annual ‘**SPRING INTO YOUR GARDEN**’ Festival

Clovis Botanical Garden
945 N. Clovis Avenue

Enjoy a spring day in the Garden!

- Plant Sale: Water-wise and California native plants
- Garden presentations on the hour starting at 10:00 a.m. Experts will share information on drought tolerant plants for your home landscape
- Landscape designer consultations; call Georgia at 287-2320 to schedule an appointment.
- Exhibits
- Food vendors
- Garden tours

Entrance: \$5.00 for adults; CBG members attend free

OTHER UPDATES

• **Congratulations to Rose and Ivan Rowe** -- members who also received an award for “creating a healthy sustainable garden.” If you know of others who have been similarly recognized, please let us know, using contact information on page 5.

• **April 11-19 - Native Plant Week**
Treat your garden to the above sign and let your neighborhood know natives are welcome in your yard.

April 22 - Earth Day -. A brief search yielded activities throughout that week in Fresno, Kings, and Madera County. Find one near you and do something nice for our earth.

May 2 – Water-Wise Plant Exchange CSUF Horticulture Greenhouses

CHINA CREEK REPORT

--Warren Shaw

February's work party was well attended. Perhaps lured by the promise (in last month's newsletter) of a lovely spring day – it was in fact cool and cloudy – a nice group, including some very welcome new faces, turned out to battle the multitude of thistle rosettes that had reared their ugly heads.

We spread out to look for the enemy, and, regrouping at break time, were able to go back and attack specific infestations after coffee and muffins. There were several dense patches of Milk Thistle on the trail to - and scattered around-- the Oak Woodland Loop; but the rest of the southwest parcel of the park was gratifyingly clean. Unhappily, though, the group working the southeast parcel found a patch of what appears to be Yellow Star Thistle, which we'll concentrate on in March. We'll also check out the north parcel again, to work on remaining rosettes and to check out the results of last year's basal bark spraying of Ailanthus and Wild Fig trees.

The March work party will be on Saturday, 3-21. Please note we'll be back on our regular schedule, starting at 8:00, which will be a double whammy, with the advent of Daylight Saving Time, so we want to emphasize that willing workers are welcome anytime; there is no tardy bell at the Park. It really should be a beautiful spring day, and we sure hope you can make it.

To get to the park, 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. Call (559-451-1256) or email <warshaw1955@gmail.com> for more information. I'll have my cell on at the park (559-281-8080)



FIELD REPORT

--Belinda Gilbert

There is good and bad news about the Sierra foothills of Madera County. First, the good news: Wildflowers bloomed early and it's beautiful! Local native shrubs, Redbud, Silver Leaf Manzanita and Buck brush are in full bloom and covered with insect pollinators. Blue Oak and White Oak (*Quercus lobata*) are budding soft green. Elderberry and bright green Buckeye leaves are most beautiful in this season. Shooting Star and Blue Dicks are the first bulbs in bloom, and annual wildflowers got an early start, with Fiddle-neck and Popcorn flower in full bloom. Goldfields, Baby Blue Eyes, Five Spot, Buttercups and Red Maids are making the most of the warm days and nights and recent rains.



Now, the bad news: Ponderosa Pines died by the hundreds last summer and over the winter. A local forester reported that 30 percent of the Ponderosas have died at the 3500 foot elevation. The local lower range of these pines was about 2000 foot elevation in 1980. This die-off seems to be happening as a result of decreased ground water and low rainfall. Bark beetles then infect pines stressed by drought conditions.

I have worked years to clear non-native annuals from the pasture area of my property. For several years, native wildflowers such as Miniature Lupine were abundant and increasing. However each year is different. The species that increased most dramatically over the past two years is Miner's Lettuce. It is tall and succulent under the cover of oaks where it receives filtered shade and extra moisture that drips from the trees. In the open pasture it is small and yellow-green in color. I'm amazed that Miner's Lettuce covers 50% of the open pasture this year, with far less Miniature Lupine, which covers only about a third of the pasture. The soil is bare where Miniature Lupines bloomed last year. This decrease puzzles me. Why would the numbers go down after several successful seasons? Other Lupine species such as White-flowered Lupine (*L. microcarpus*) are increasing, and after I sowed some seed, Spider Lupine germinated. The Annual Lupine population seems stable, although in some years, the numbers are low.

Despite the puzzling Lupine populations, the weather is mild and warm, the wildflower show is beginning and I am enjoying the early spring!

Poppies!

--Jane Pritchard

Note: Jane sends a reminder that she is happy to attend anyone on any field trip any day or they can join a group on a slow amble usually every week on Friday. <xxiii_xx@yahoo.com> 559-765-9954. Jane knows our hiking areas and their plants like few others in our chapter.



All the beautiful hikes in the foothills during February were completely eclipsed by the hike on March 6 along Big Creek Road at the far end of what used to be Pine Flat Reservoir (now a mud flat). Hills and roadsides were carpeted with poppies through Burrough Valley Road, a left turn on Maxon Creek Road, and another left on Trimmer Springs Road. Some hills looked like paint had been poured at top and spilled down the sides. Poppies do well in drier years and are crowded out by grasses in wet years. Most poppies were large and dark gold but every one I inspected was *Eschscholzia caespitosa* not the expected California poppy=*E. californica* which has a torus (round, flat platform at the base of the petals). We

stopped several times for photo ops during the drive.

A surprising amount of water in Big Creek gurgled down rapids and fell into large placid pools. Water reflected gold from the poppy-covered hillsides or reflected sycamores, shrubs, and metamorphic rocks. We saw western pond turtles=*Clemmys marmorata* in one pool. Cliff swallows nest in the rocks along the road but haven't arrived yet this spring. From Fresno drive east on Belmont Avenue, which becomes Trimmer Springs Road; continue to Big Creek Road, a wide dirt road to your left. This route includes many poppy-covered hills overlooking the lake that we did not see on our way from Auberry.

Wild cucumber aka Sierra man-root=*Marah horrida* is even showier this year than last. Vines are huge and covered with white flowers. Some prickly fruits were forming with the flowers attached. They are occasionally dioecious (different sexes on separate plants). *Marah* is perennial with a large tuber and branched tendrils for climbing up poison oak, redbuds, and anything else handy. If nothing is within tendril reach, the vine sprawls on the ground. *Marah* is Hebrew: bitter, as are all parts of this plant. Blooms March-April.

Baby blue-eyes=*Nemophila menziesii* var. *menziesii* have also been outstanding for more than a month with bright blue flowers with black-dotted white centers and blue veins. Baby blue-eyes grows in CA—FP and Mojave Desert washes. All nemophilas are annuals. Nemo is from Greek and Latin: woodland glade; phila is Greek: loving, fond of. Blooms February-May.

Little baby blue-eyes=*Nemophila pulchella* var. *pulchella* are small darker blue flowers with white centers and climb over shaded moist slopes and roadside banks. Leaves are opposite; uppermost leaves may be alternate. Blooms April-June.

Pretty nemophila=*N. Pulchella* var. *gracilis* has small cream-colored flowers and climbs over partially shaded moist areas. Leaves are alternate. Blooms March-May.

I puzzled over mats of tiny white scapose flowers growing from basal rosettes of obovate leaves on Sugar Loaf in early February. They had 4 deeply lobed petals and tasted like the mustard family. A couple weeks later we saw it again, and Peg remembered it was *Draba verna*. Of the 26 species in California, this is the only one with 2-lobed petals. It is an annual native to Eurasia and north Africa that now grows throughout CA (except deserts) in open or disturbed places. *Draba* is Greek: acrid, describing the taste of crucifer leaves. I like that taste which is “nippy” and not pungent or irritating. *Verna* is Latin: spring. Blooms February-May. Native drabas are usually alpine and may have yellow flowers. The genus is difficult to key; species are very localized and highly variable and complex.

The bloom dates are those listed in Jepson. All these were already in bloom at the beginning of February. You can see that most flowers are blooming at least a month early.

Native Plant Observations

--from **Thelma Valdez**

If I were more like Thomas Jefferson, I would have kept notes on precipitation, temperature, plant, and animal goings-on in our little field for the past 25 years. This year the field, AKA the back four, has less foxtail than some years. Last year's dearth of rain was hard on those pesky grasses. The field has more Sky Lupine than I've ever seen. Redmaids are everywhere, too, reaching toward the sun with an unusual legginess to outstretch non-native filaree blossoms. And the last time I saw this many Blue Dicks was years ago after a "normal" winter. The gophers have divided Harvest Brodiaea bulbs and moved them around and around and around. The brodiaea leaves are so long they lie on the ground like beautiful green fiber. Timing isn't everything but it counts for a lot.



Blue Dick Kristie Wilde
Kristie@wilde-art.com

--from **Warren Shaw**

Given the mildness of the winter we're not surprised that our native landscape plants are showing signs of life. Quite a number of the redbud seedlings we received and potted last fall and had given up for dead, now have leaves or at least new buds. Blue-eyed grass plants are blooming. Our Desert Willows are leafing out; Birdseye Gilia is starting to bloom, and both California Poppies and Apricot Mallow look close.

Our Ceanothus is in bloom for the first time and Brodiaea is up. The Western Cottonwood we planted last spring, which took off like a rocket, has fat buds, and Toyon and Bush Lupine show a lot of new growth.

On a recent trip to Shaver Lake, we noted Redbud in full bloom and Bush Lupine well started. Buck Brush is blooming. We also saw lots of Popcorn and Fiddleneck, and a few poppies in the foothills. Then (best for last) we took a drive up Trimmer Springs to Big Creek Road, following Jane's lead, and saw a display of Poppies exceeding anything in our memory (even though we lived in that area for over ten years)! There were also Lupines, a little Redbud and even some Penstemon, but the Poppies are the stars of the show. Don't Miss This!



Penstemon

--from **Jeanne Larson**

Heat and cold effects on natives in my yard was varied. The Blue Eyed Grass was hit very hard by the heat in my sandy soil as I tried to be thrifty with water. Seed dropped from the seed heads, that didn't get cut-off in time, are producing so many seedlings, they will have to be thinned. Freeze surviving Coast natives-- Pacific Coast iris showed no freeze damage whatever perhaps because they were nestled in Crepe Myrtle duff and coastal Erigeron daisies look fine, although scraggly after fall bloom, and have spread.



Blue-eyed grass

Thoughts now are-- How I can dig out more backyard grass, and refit the sprinkler system to water trees and a vegetable garden of only a few tomatoes this summer?

Membership

John & Michele LuValle

Thanks to new and renewing members:
 •John Bourdeau •John Buada •Allyson Smith

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.



SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- *President** open
- *Vice-Pres.** Warren Shaw 559/451-1256 (h)
warshaw1955@gmail.com
- *Secretary** Marian Orvis 559/226-0145 (h)
mforvet@comcast.net
- *Treasurer** Jeanne Larson 559/243-0815 (h)
jrjlars@aol.com
- Membership** Michele LuValle luvalle@mcn.org
John LuValle jluvalle@mcn.org
- Field Trips** Jane Pritchard 559/765-9954
xxiii_xx@yahoo.com
- Newsletter Editors** Warren&Helen Shaw 559/451-1256(h)
warshaw1955@gmail.com
helshaw@gmail.com
- Hospitality** Madeleine Mitchell 559/638-2784 (h)
madeleine43@comcast.net
- Horticulture** open
- Education** Warren Shaw (See Newsletter)
- Rare Plant** Jane Pritchard (See Field Trips)
- Plant Sale** Thelma Valdez (see Webmaster)
- Conservation** Jeanne Larson (see Treasurer)
- Directors at Large** Jim Seay jnjseay@gmail.com
Belinda Gilbert belinda@sti.net
- Webmaster** Thelma Valdez 559/323-8962 (h)
yucca37tv@yahoo.com

Next Newsletter: April 2015

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw helshaw@gmail.com. The deadline for the April newsletter is Friday, Apr. 3



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

March 2015

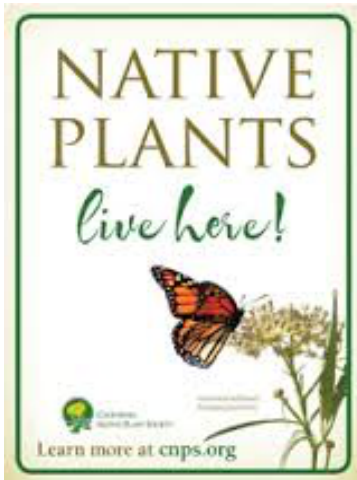


CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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

MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Madeleine Mitchell



In the past year I killed, then dug out a small bermuda/weedy lawn and have planted native grasses, so no mowing. In October at our plant sale I purchased new perennials and a native Bay Laurel, which will eventually provide some shade from the western setting sun. The tree is at the edge of the meadow area. I have had some help with this project and recently had a man help with a broken adobe path, which forms an oval around the meadow. I had retained the mowing strips, which were professionally done over 20 years ago and widened it with the adobe pavers. A friend was moving and offered them to me. Adobe is now hard to find locally since Hans Sumpf closed in Madera.

I'm calling this new area my mini meadow and it's starting to bloom. The *Nassella pulchra* and *cernua* are blooming and the volunteer poppies are filling in where there is any room between the grasses. I transplanted the extra bunch grasses from my original garden along with Berkeley Sedge, which recently was found not to be a Calif. native after all. I will take those out when other grasses and shrubs fill in.

I found some flowers on the *Ceanothus maritimus* "Valley Violet" today. There are buds on the Apricot mallow. Nearby the "Bees Bliss" salvia is covered with the sky blue flowers and with bees. I bought this from Intermountain at our plant sales in 2010 and it has spread to over 12 ft. in diameter!!. It doesn't get any summer water and is just the most incredible plant. I recently ordered a sign from CNPS that says "Native Plants Live Here" with a Monarch butterfly on a Milkweed. I do need to add that somewhere to do my part.

**March 2015
Sequoia Chapter CNPS**



Yosemite Lewisia
(*Lewisia disepala*)



Bush Lupine
(*Lupinus albifrons*)



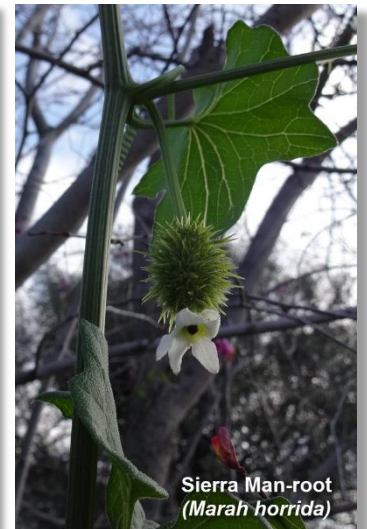
Sierra Mock Stonecrop
(*Sedella pumila*)



Baby Blue Eyes
(*Nemophila menziesii*)



Sierra Gooseberry
(*Ribes roezlii*)



Sierra Man-root
(*Marah horrida*)



California Poppies
(*Eschscholzia californica*)



Bladderpod
(*Isomeris arborea* var *arborea*)



Dirty Phacelia
(*Phacelia cicutaria*)



Tauschia
(*Tauschia hartwegii*)



Chocolate Lily
(*Fritillaria biflora* var. *biflora*)



Shooting Star
(*Dodecatheon hendersonii*)

Photo credits:

Eileen Bennett: Taushia (Tollhouse Road on Burrough Mountain), Isomeris and Phacelia (San Joaquin River Gorge), Red Maids, BabyBlue-Eyes (near Sugar Loaf Mountain); Poppies (hills near Pine Flat Reservoir)

Aaron Turner: Shooting Star, Lupine, Man-Root, Gooseberry (Black Mountain)

Anna Bennett: Chocolate Lily at Salt Creek Preserve near San Diego)