



# CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter  
California Native Plant Society

November 2005

## CHAPTER MEETING: *SPEAKER, BOOKS, & PLANTS*

**Tuesday, November 15, 7:00 p.m.**

Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue). The public is welcome!

We have a full slate of activity for Tuesday's meeting:

### ***"The Grand Bluffs Demonstration Forest" with speaker Bonnie Bladen, Intermountain Nursery***

The Grand Bluffs Demonstration Forest near Dinkey Creek is a 240-acre forest at 5800' elevation. Join us as Bonnie discusses the diversity of the natural resources found there, including wildflowers and other plants, soils, water, wildlife, and forest habitat. She will also share information on historic and prehistoric perspectives of the area.

Bonnie will also present information about the current brush chipping and reforestation projects, and the plans for a conservation easement.



### ***Book Sale***

We will have many books for sale. Please come by, browse, and pick up some real bargains. Just in time for the holidays...or for yourself!

### ***Mini-Plant Sale***

We will have some native bulbs and divisions of native iris available for sale. These can go into the ground right now in time for a nice showing in spring. We will also have some native grasses in gallon pots that would be perfect for that area in your garden that is mostly clay. They'll get a good root system throughout winter and be ready for oohs and ahhs in mid-March.



### ***Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.***

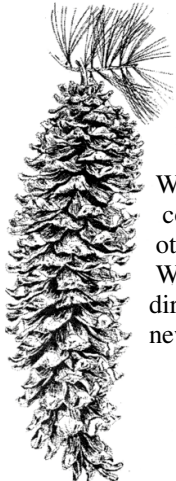
Of course board members should attend, but the membership at large is always welcome at board meetings.

## NEW AND VACANT POSITIONS

As of December 31, 2005 several offices and committee positions will be open. A nominating committee has been formed with the responsibility of filling new and vacant positions.

Positions available include President, Programs (co-chair), and field Trips (co-chair). We are also looking for a Madera County VP and 2 Directors at Large.

We will be calling some of you, but if you think you could help in one of the areas mentioned or any other area, please call or email Marian Orvis, Warren Shaw, or Thelma Valdez (contact info in the directory found on the next to last page of this newsletter).



## DOCENT OPPORTUNITY

Can you spare a few hours to spend with youth, encouraging them to appreciate the world of Valley Oaks, a local park, and the promise of what can be accomplished when we focus our efforts?

If the answer is yes, we'd love to have you as a China Creek docent. Education chair, Peggy Jones, would like to "do the trail" and give the kids a feel for the location.

She will have 2 classes, 60 kids total, and prefers to break them into small groups with an adult in each group. The date and time is Wednesday, November 16 from approximately 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

The last time the classes visited China Creek we had a scavenger hunt and we might work that in again. E-mail Peggy at < Autumn\_Aspen@hotmail.com > to let her know you might be interested. She will provide you with details.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



When I started as president, I declared two goals for my “administration”: getting started on the long-anticipated China Creek restoration/education project, and accelerating outreach effort. And, now, as I near the end of my term and evaluate my success, I’d say, well, yes we have made a start at China Creek, and I’m pretty proud of our accomplishments there (though there’s a lot left to do).

Our outreach efforts too have met with some success. We’ve made progress in our contacts with schools, the community and with county bureaucracy. Our hardworking board members have presented beautiful displays at a great variety of events, published great brochures, posters, and newsletters, attended public meetings, written letters, sold plants, posters, books, and gloves and distributed reams of good advice. I confess, however, disappointment in the membership numbers.

Population is growing rapidly throughout our three-county (Fresno, Madera, Kings) area. And new houses are going up at a record rate. At the same time the community is realizing that our water supply is depleted, and nothing we can do—including more dams—will actually increase the amount of water available. It is a finite resource.

There isn’t much CNPS can do about ever increasing population and development, but we can help with the water problem.

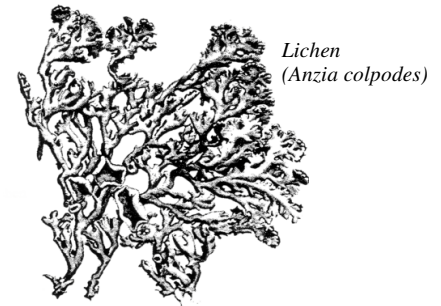
In fact, this situation should offer us a unique opportunity. There are thousands of new people—with thousands of new houses to landscape—a perfect opportunity to advocate for native plants and to attract some new members. The problem, as I see it, is communication. The board has discussed some solutions:

- A Chapter website
- A native home garden tour
- Some kind of spring wildflower event

But the current board’s resources (time, energy, expertise) are limited. So, I have two questions for you, the membership, to consider:

1. Can you think of other ways we could reach people?
2. Are you able/willing to help—with these or other outreach efforts?

If so, let me know (559-855-4519) or [warshaw@netptc.net](mailto:warshaw@netptc.net)



Lichen  
(*Anzia colpodetes*)

- Warren Shaw

## OBSERVATIONS

In Madera County, Blue Oaks and Interior Live oaks have begun to shed their leaves. The Blues held their leaves all through the summer this year, even at the lowest elevations. This is in contrast to many parts of Fresno County where Blue Oaks went drought deciduous a month or so ago.

The Blue Oak acorn crop is light and it will be interesting to see how many seedlings sprout under the canopies in spring. Interior Live Oaks produced a moderate crop of acorns which has not gone unnoticed by the local deer and Acorn Woodpeckers. Small groups of deer can be seen foraging on acorns under Live Oaks in yards all around Yosemite Lakes Park

Coffeeberry shrubs still have ripening berries and the local deer are supplementing their diets with these making regular trips to the local bushes several times per week to partake. Scrub Jays, Phainopepla, Western Blue Birds,

Titmice, and White Crown Sparrows are also enjoying the feast. New growth had sprouted from the Coffeeberry even before the recent storms arrived!

California Buckeyes are still holding their pear-shaped seed pods like Christmas ornaments from whitish-colored limbs. A few trees still have dried up leaves attached to the branches. An occasional tree still has some green leaves present. Soon the seed pods will drop and split open to reveal the smooth chestnut-colored seed within. The seeds are huge, beautiful, and toxic. Anyone who collects Buckeye seeds should wash their hands immediately after handling and never allow small children to play with them.

The recent storms have awakened numerous small plants from their summer dormancy. Maidenhair Fern is sprouting new growth on green, moss-covered boulders under a number of oaks.

In the foothills the recent little rain produced immediate results. The mosses glowed with appreciation almost immediately. Within a few days lichens were brightening up, and tiny green things—mostly annual grasses and fillarees—were sprouting.

Wind and rain also accelerated defoliation in blue oaks and buckeyes, and sycamores are just beginning to turn.

Natives in proximity to the city aren’t always as obvious as foothill flora, but that makes them all the more fun when one discovers them. Along the 168 freeway, east of the Herndon off ramp, Toyon can be seen bearing large clusters of berries. Or the house on Bullard in Fresno whose huge Desert Willow is covered in long slender seed pods. My own renegade California Fuchsia were still in full bloom up until press time!

-- Editor

## CHINA CREEK UPDATE

The October workday did not draw a big crew, but old hand Howard Latimer, and new member Ann Merrill did turn out to wage war on wicked weeds. We turned our attention mainly to resprouting yellow star thistle in the grazing area, where it was sparse enough that a crew our size could make a visible difference.

In other news, Hank Urbach has mowed the trail as promised and Bud Setensich of Fresno County Parks has agreed to help spread our accumulated shredded material on the trail with an inmate crew. This work is tentatively scheduled to commence this week. It will be a great relief to have this done.

Next we'll be turning our attention to building and repairing fences to allow expansion of the grazing for YST abatement, which was so successful in the trial area.

Our next workday will be experimentally scheduled midweek on Wednesday, Nov. 16, (the day after our chapter meeting) from 9 – 3. Once again we will attack weeds in one way or another. Please bring appropriate tools, lunch, water, and gloves. The park is at the end of Smith Avenue south of Rainbow near Centerville.

-- Warren Shaw

## YARD SALE REPORT

A "Thank you" to Marian Orvis, Rose Rowe, and Thelma Valdez for their time and work at holding this year's yard sale. It produced \$237 for the chapter.

Special thanks to new member Carole Graham for her large donation of big pots and gardening books for this month's book sale.

*When I lived amongst the roots  
they pleased me more than flowers did,  
and when I spoke to a stone  
it rang like a bell.*

*It is so long, the spring  
which goes on all winter.  
Time lost its shoes.  
A year is four centuries.*

Pablo Neruda  
"Too Many Names"

## HORTICULTURE

For native plant gardeners November is an important time. In particular, this year's November has started out warmer than usual and provides us with an excellent window of time to get plants in the ground with plenty of warmth in the ground to encourage their roots to start settling in. For newly planted California native plants, fall and winter is all about the roots. Even for established plants, the moisture they receive in the next few months has a huge impact on their growth and fruit production.

The goal with natives in our gardens is to provide a habitat as close as possible to that of their native ancestry and with other plants that natively grow in the same plant communities. You can grow coastal plants if you are willing to create a coastal environment for them. Desert plants can thrive as long as you provide a desert-like habitat. The least amount of work, however, comes from selecting plants based on the habitat existing in your garden right now. Soil, sun, and water are the major factors. Match what you have with plants that are happy with that and you'll have a low maintenance, attractive native plant garden that appeals to humans, birds, and insects

For all California natives, however, our wet winters mean that when you plant, be prepared to water throughout the winter between periods of rain. The idea is to give the plant a really good first year in the ground, regardless of whether the weather actually provides a good year.

The first year is crucial to the health and longevity of natives. When you read the words "until established", that usually means two to three years. So prepare the area where you'll be planting by really soaking the soil until it's moist down to a foot or more. If you have heavy soil, use micro sprays so the water soaks very gradually – this might require leaving the micro spray on for 8 hours.

Once the area is soaked, you're ready to plant. If you have heavy clay soil, wait a day or two to let the top layer dry out slightly before planting. Then dig a hole only a little larger than the pot, remove the plant, careful to disturb the roots as little as possible, and place in the hole slightly higher (no more than an inch) than the surrounding soil. Fill the hole with native soil and tamp to remove any air pockets. Now water again to ensure the roots have plenty of moisture and any remaining air pockets are gone. Use a lot of water – 10, 20 gallons' worth. Mulch around the plant (keep mulch away from the stem), and check the soil every week until spring. Water when it's dry and don't water if it's moist. Give the plant the idea that it's living in a perfect California winter (like last year's) and has no worries but to establish good roots. You're on your way!



## RELATED ACTIVITIES

### Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Visit <[www.sierrafoothill.org](http://www.sierrafoothill.org)> for more information, registration, and changes/additions or call 559/855-3473.

#### Hikes

Saturday Nov. 26	<b>Hikes at the McKenzie preserve.</b> Work off your thanksgiving feast by walking the Discovery Trail (easy 3.7 miles) or hiking to the top of the table (moderate 6 miles). These are our only hikes of the fall season – be sure to enjoy the cool air and beautiful views. Free. Meet at 9 a.m. with lunch and water.
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### CNPS 40th Anniversary Party

The East Bay Chapter and the Willis L. Jepson Chapter are organizing a fun evening party celebrating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of CNPS. The party coincides with the CNPS Chapter Council meeting in Berkeley on the weekend of December 3. All CNPS members are invited to come to this very special celebration. There will be a silent auction along with food and drink, a jazz duo, and a live auction later in the evening.

**Date:** Friday, December 2, 2005

**Time:** 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm

**Place:** Brazilian Room, Tilden Regional Park, Berkeley

**Cost:** \$10 plus a few dollars for wine or beer

**What to Bring:** A contribution to the Auction (see below) and money to spend on the auction items

**Refreshments:** Appetizers, Moroccan stew (all veggie or with chicken), rice pilaf, salad, fruit, anniversary cake, soft drinks, coffee, and tea will be served. Wine and beer will be available for a reasonable price.

**To attend, please RSVP by November 25.**

We will be paying a per person charge, so it is important that you tell us if you are coming. Please call (925) 372-0687 to RSVP or if you have questions. Find out more information at <[www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org)>

### San Joaquin River Parkway Nature Walks

Spend time along the San Joaquin River observing native trees, birds, and wildlife in their natural, undisturbed setting. You'll see some of the largest stands of Valley Oak and other native valley tree species.

Reservations required: 248.8480 x110. \$2.00 per person. River Parkway Trust members and children under 6 are free. All walks begin at the River Center (11605 Old Friant Road, Fresno) and are held on Saturdays 8:30 – 12 noon

Saturday, November 12	<i>Ball ranch / Ledger Island</i>
Saturday, November 19	<i>Willow Unit Ecological Preserve</i>
Saturday, December 3	<i>Rank Island Ecological Preserve</i>
Saturday, December 10	<i>Ball ranch / Ledger Island</i>
Saturday, December 17	<i>Willow Unit Ecological Preserve</i>

### Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy Site Stewardship Program Intern Position

The Site Stewardship Program, part of the non-profit Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, is seeking a motivated intern starting in January (6 mos. - 1 year) to work in a dynamic community and volunteer based habitat restoration program. Work sites are in a variety of coastal habitats north and south of the Golden Gate Bridge and support three endangered species.

Intern duties:

- 1) help prioritize and plan habitat restoration projects and volunteer workdays;
- 2) conduct on-the-ground habitat restoration including invasive species control, fence construction, and revegetation;
- 3) engage local community by leading interpretive hikes, posting interpretive materials, and corresponding with volunteers;
- 4) monitor restoration progress;
- 5) help prepare summary reports and revise management plans;
- 6) maintain tools and equipment.

Minimum qualifications:

- a love of nature and an enthusiasm working outdoors
- interest in ecological restoration and endangered species management
- work independently and within a team and assume a leadership role when needed
- great verbal and written communication skills
- Microsoft Word and Excel competency
- Flexibility, sense of humor, and willingness to collaborate a must!

Desirable qualifications:

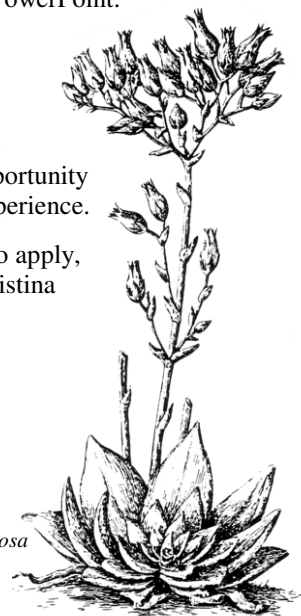
- familiarity with ecological concepts;
- experience conducting habitat restoration or related work;
- plant/animal identification skills;
- experience with Global Positioning Systems and Geographic Information Systems;
- experience with Photoshop and PowerPoint.

Compensation:

- free housing in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area;
- a stipend of \$15/day (\$75/week);
- personalized training and the opportunity to gain very marketable work experience.

For more info, call 415/561-3070. To apply, send a resume and cover letter to Christina Crooker at

<[ccrooker@parksconservancy.org](mailto:ccrooker@parksconservancy.org)>



*Dudleya cymosa*

Thanks to the following for renewing their membership:

Bergthold, Enyedy, CSU Fresno Madden Library, --Fresno  
 Clines, --Oakhurst  
 Janzen, --Reedley

Thanks to all renewing members for their continuing support. Corrections of membership information can be sent to Helen Shaw <helshaw@netptc.net>



Send newsletter contributions, corrections, or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at < nmtv@att.net >. The next newsletter will be the December issue. Contributions are due by Saturday, December 10.

**Would you prefer to have your newsletter sent via e-mail as a PDF instead of printed and delivered by the U.S. Postal Service? If so, email Helen Shaw <helshaw@netptc.net> and let her know.**

**SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS\* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

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<b>Field trips / Programs</b>	Joanna Clines 57003 Road 225 North Fork, CA 93643	559/877-2218 x3150 (w) jclines@fs.fed.us	<b>Education</b>	Peggy Jones 1931 Winter Street Kingsburg, CA 93631	559/897-9646 autumn_aspen@hotmail.com
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<b>Hospitality</b>	Madeleine Mitchell 580 W. Manning Reedley, CA 93654	559/638-2784 (h) madpaul@cvip.net	<b>Plant Sale</b>	Marian Orvis	(see Secretary)
			<b>Conservation Co-chairs</b>	Jeanne Larson Joseph Oldham 29123 Yosemite Spr. Pky. Coarsegold, CA 93614	(see above) 559/658-7165 J.Oldham1@sti.net



**JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY**

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: \_\_\_\_\_

- Student/Retired/Limited Income.....\$20
- Individual or Library .....\$35
- Family or Group .....\$45
- Supporting .....\$75
- Plant Lover .....\$100
- Patron .....\$250
- Benefactor .....\$500
- Bristlecone .....\$1000

Make your check payable to "CNPS" and mail with this form to:

**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

November 2005



CALIFORNIA NATIVE  
PLANT SOCIETY  
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

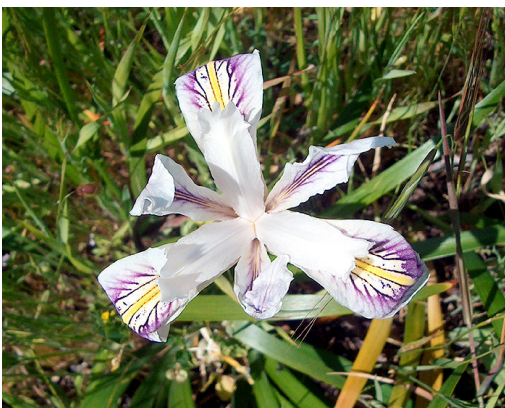
c/o Jeanne Larson • 3457 Redlands • Fresno, CA 93726



**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](http://www.cnps.org) >**

## FEATURED PLANT

### Douglas Iris (*Iris douglasii*)



been found in the wild that are over 100 years old). Surely you have a place for a Douglas Iris in your native plant garden.

These garden hybrids can take watering about every week to ten days, usually in the late afternoon or evening, and whenever the soil gets dry year around. They prefer partly sunny to medium shady conditions but won't bloom if

We will have some divisions of native iris at our meeting on Tuesday, November 15. They are easy to grow and extremely long-lived (clumps have

planted in heavy shade. They thrive under the shade from oak canopies and make an excellent companion to oaks.

A light redwood compost mulch helps reduce soil temperatures and retain moisture, but it should be kept at least an inch or two away from the base of the foliage.

The plant reaches 1-2' tall with a 3" flower. In spring, the flowers range from lavender to violet and are framed by broad leaves. Douglas Iris is found on dry, grassy slopes and brush lands only between southern Oregon and central California. However, it is hardy from USDA zones 5-10. It grows well in either sun or shade and with little care will spread to form a 2-4' clump.

Douglas Iris is also categorized as a noxious weed when it grows in livestock grazing pastures since livestock will not graze its bitter leaves and it forms dense clumps. In your garden, however, you will feel lucky to have this gorgeous native blooming this spring!