



## China Creek Update

Warren Shaw

Despite March Madness, we were able to field a good team for our March workday, and spread some more mulch on the interpretive trail. Many thanks to those who helped.

**April Workday.** We expect the April workday to be extra special because we're coordinating with HandsOn Central California to bring a team of young volunteers to the park to participate in our project. To take advantage of this opportunity we've changed the scheduled date from the 18th to the 25th.

We're hoping to focus the youthful strength and energy of these folks on our worst weeds and to make sure their work is truly effective, we need a full complement of weed experts to identify their targets and direct their efforts. If you can reliably identify an exotic invasive thistle, we could sure use your help.

To work with their schedule, we're adjusting our usual hours to 10 am - 2 pm. It should be a great spring day and a special chance to channel the enthusiastic efforts of some great kids. Hope you can join us.

Rakes and pitchforks will be the tools of the day. Call me, Warren Shaw, at 855-4519, or email me at <warshaw@netptc.net> for directions or with questions or suggestions.

## Lupine Research: A Call for Help

Have you ever had trouble keying Lupines to species in the field? Have you ever doubted the biological reality of different lupine species? Finally, these *Lupinus* mysteries are being investigated! A study at University of California, Berkeley is examining the origins and spread of *Lupinus nanus* and *Lupinus bicolor* in California.

Samples will be taken from populations throughout the state, and analyzed using Legume CYCLOIDEA (LEGCYC) genes and microsatellites to determine the phylogenetic relationships of these two species. Collections will commence mid-March and continue through the flowering season.

If you or anyone you know has seen these species growing together (or within a five mile radius from each other) please contact Jessica Shade of UC Berkeley. She is in desperate need of help finding collection sites! Contact Jessica Shade at 831.295.9677 or [shade@berkeley.edu](mailto:shade@berkeley.edu). Thank you!

P.S. from Jessica: "I made a map of all the sympatric populations of *L. bicolor* and *L. nanus* in California (from CA herbarium specimen, how I love the Consortium of California Herbaria) and noticed several instances of both of these species growing in sympatry around Madera and Fresno Counties (although these samples were collected between 1905 and 1937, so I expect the landscape to have changed a bit!)."

## Climate Change Comes to Your Backyard

Excerpted from an article by Jennifer Weeks in *The Daily Climate*  
March 23, 2009

The U.S.D.A's [Plant Hardiness Zone Map](#) is about to make very clear how much rising temperatures have shifted planting zones northward. They will be updating the Plant Hardiness Zone Map for the first time in 20 years. The map shows where various types of plant species can thrive, and as warmer annual temperatures move northward, more than 80 million U.S. gardeners and farmers will be looking to the map to see what new plants may be able to grow in their area. The Plant Hardiness Zone Map is typically used for domesticated plants, but it also demonstrates that native plant species are shifting due to climate change.

By injecting climate change into one of America's favorite pastimes, the revised USDA map could become an important public education tool. "Hopefully the new map will clear up a lot of confusion about what's happening to the climate," said Nardozi. The updated map is due out later this year.

<http://www.dailyclimate.org/tdc-newsroom/usda/climate-change-comes-to-your-backyard> (for the entire article)

## Sierra Nevada Grassroots Directory

Planning and Conservation League have announced in CALIFORNIA TODAY that the Sierra Nevada Grassroots Directory has been launched. "The document explores issues prevalent in each of the 25 California and Nevada counties found in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range.. The entire directory has been posted on the PCL Foundation website, [www.PCLFoundation.org](http://www.PCLFoundation.org)."

## Fresno Cactus and Succulent Society

Stephen Ingram, author of "Cacti, Agaves and Yuccas of California and Nevada" will speak at the June 4th meeting. It's held at the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center at 5340 N. Fresno St. Doors open at 6:30 with meeting and program to follow at 7:00 pm.

## Water-wise Garden Give & Take

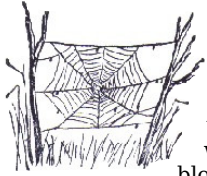
Saturday, May 16, 2009

The Central Valley Water Awareness Committee is hosting a Water-wise Garden Give & Take at the Claude Laval Water and Energy Technology Incubator on the southwest corner of Chestnut and Barstow on the campus of CSUF in Fresno. The Sequoia Chapter of CNPS will be there to emphasize the value of using native plants in landscaping.

Bring a water-wise garden plant to exchange!

[www.centralvalleywater.org](http://www.centralvalleywater.org)

## Observations



In Jeanne Larson's Fresno garden "...the Bee's Bliss sage (a prostrate form of Cleveland Sage) was a little early blooming before the native bees had emerged from their homes in the ground. Before our most welcome rain bees had become busy at the blossoms in big numbers. My Farewell to Spring were really looking desperate as I have been watering minimally, but the rain gave them new life. They seem to have grown two inches and are looking more robust. Does this mean we will have a good display in the foothills? (Read on to find out....ed.)

The young Frosty Blue Ceanothus shrub has bloomed this third year. Last summer I found that when some of the leaves were looking yellow it meant that it needed water. After an irrigation the leaves turned green again and did not drop off. The heavy early rains have produced a large number of bicolor lupine. I harvested the seed on a nearby vacant lot that is waiting for development. Unfortunately that acreage is now mostly ripgut brome, Russian thistle and puncture vine because the tractor used for Fresno City code fire protection had rubber tires full of weeds from a previous job."

In the foothills recent rains have just increased the already lush bloom; poppies have abated somewhat, but goldfields have gilded vast areas of the slopes. Recent additions to the palette are Pretty Faces, Chinese houses and Ithuriel's Spear. Most blue oaks are in full leaf, but not yet "blue," and buckeyes are forming "candles."

We get the following report from Jane Pritchard: "A few years ago Peg Smith showed me a beautiful spot on Black Mountain. It's only a short distance off the trail but usually other hikers won't go there with me. The few who do are blown away and go crazy taking pictures. Brilliant yellow *Coreopsis bigelovii* grows around exposed granite on a west facing slope. Red-gold California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are punctuated with dark blue spikes of spider lupine (*Lupinus benthami*). Many years harlequin lupine (*L. stiversi*) appears - but not this year. *Lupinus citrinus* (orange lupine) hadn't even budded yet (April 5).

Farther down-slope is a grassy seep with more soil. First time there I found an unusual little composite at the moist, shaded base of a granite boulder. It was the only one in sight so I left it alone expecting that Peg could identify it from my description. She couldn't, and I couldn't find it again.

This year four other brave, enthusiastic hikers enjoyed these flowery rocks with me. One of them explored the grassier area and returned with a specimen of my long-lost mystery flower. It was less than 4" tall and had opposite pairs of entire lanceolate leaves, 5 faint yellowish-white ray flowers spaced apart, and very light yellow disk flowers. Back on the gravel road, we met the botanist Chris Winchell who keyed it to *Lasthenia californica*. Plain old goldfields? I would never have imagined it. Chris said the ray flowers can be very light colored. How disappointing! I expected a new addition to the plant list. Jepson gives the number of ray flowers as 6-13 and does say it is highly variable and needs more study."

Madeleine Mitchesll says, "My *Prunus ilicifolia*, (holly leaf cherry) seems to be blooming early this year, it has formed buds in early April. It usually blooms in May. The bees love it and pollinate the flowers which provide large-seeded, but delicious, fruit in mid summer. New plants planted last fall that are blooming: *Huechera* "Opal", and *Salvia sonomoensis*, creeping salvia. Grasses that are spreading from three plants a few years ago to six now, is *Nassella cernua*, nodding needlegrass."

In the heavy clay flatlands east of Clovis my passion for California native grasses often finds me in the midst of these remarkable plants. In spring their delicate leaves and awns above ground belie the toughness beneath the surface evolved to survive hot summers without rain.

Grasses can sometimes be a hard sell, though. Lots of people think that all grasses are weeds. One sees mostly non-natives in empty lots, fields, and the foothills and those darn foxtails get in your socks! Over the years I've spoken to many people who tell me they have a lot of "that kind of grass" on their property. True enough, until you've seen native and non-native grasses side by side and spent time around their root systems, some non-natives look an awful lot like natives. It doesn't take long with some careful observation, to see the differences. And then you just might be hooked!

-Editor

## Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations

Using classroom and field exercises, the workshop will focus on the role of plant population monitoring for adaptive management. Participants will learn how to develop good management objectives. Topics cover principles of sampling and several sampling designs, field techniques for measuring vegetation, analyzing monitoring data and presenting results. Participants will receive a copy of the BLM-published book, *Measuring and Monitoring Plant Populations* by Caryl Elzinga, Dan Salzer, and John Willoughby and other useful materials. Cost: Members \$290 Non-members \$315.

Primary Instructor: John Willoughby, former State Botanist for the Bureau of Land Management Location: Fort Ord, Monterey. To find out more information about this and other CNPS workshops, go to: <http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/index.php>

## Appreciating California Native Plants

Like many who do not consider themselves to be any kind of scientist, much less a botanist, I grew up giving little thought to native plants. I was, however, blessed with a mother who had a life-long sense of wonder and curiosity about her surroundings.

She loved flowers and a drive through the foothills for a spring picnic was one of our family's yearly rituals. She could name hundreds of wildflowers and my sisters and I absorbed her appreciation and even many of the flower names. I remember her telling us of driving through Kern County on her way home from Los Angeles and seeing poppies extending from Highway 99 to the eastern horizon-- a sight I will never see and can only imagine.

Although my mother and her daughters would never have been able to name the blossoms of *Eschscholzia*, *Nemophila*, or *Clarkia*, we watched for poppies and baby blue-eyes, and the elusive but dramatic shooting star. We never heard of *Clarkia* but knew our long hot summer was fast approaching as we followed the fading pink of Farewell to Spring.

My mother lived nearly 95 years and enjoyed our wildflowers, those most lovable California natives, for most of those years. Not only that, she passed along her appreciation to her daughters who are reminded of her at this time every year. This year's foothill display of poppies is said to be the best in living memory of many. I doubt it would rival that near the Tehachapis 80 years ago, but if she were still with us, I know she'd be as thrilled as she always on a drive from Centerville to Trimmer then down Watts Valley Road and back to Fresno.

- Helen Shaw

## Membership

Helen Shaw

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact Helen Shaw at [helshaw@netptc.net](mailto:helshaw@netptc.net)

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



### \*New Members and Membership Renewals

**Fresno** : Jones, O'Leary, Phillips, Pritchard, Tietz  
**Madera** : Gilbert  
**Out of Area** : Kreps (Tulare)

The IRS considers dues in excess of \$12.00 per year and all gifts to CNPS as tax deductible.

Renew your CNPS membership online using a credit card. As an option, set it up to renew automatically year after year. It is quick, easy, convenient, and reduces renewal mailing costs. Visit [www.cnps.org](http://www.cnps.org) and click on the JOIN button.

## SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS\* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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<b>Education</b>	Peggy Jones	(see Past President)
<b>Rare Plant</b>	John Stebbins johnst@cvip.net	559/297-0144 (h)
<b>Plant Sale</b>	Marian Orvis	(see Secretary)
<b>Conservation Co-chairs</b>	Jeanne Larson Joseph Oldham	(see Treasurer) (see Horticulture)
<b>Directors at Large</b>	Jim Seay Verna Arnest	jaseay@comcast.net vernaj@sti.net

### S.H.A.R.E.S. Card for Sequoia Chapter

The Sequoia Chapter of CNPS has received our S.H.A.R.E.S. Cards. The SHARES card is an arrangement with SaveMart and FoodMaxx stores whereby most purchases at these stores earn points. A percentage of these points becomes a donation to the Chapter.

It's easy to use. Simply present your card at checkout before you pay for your purchases. The cashier swipes the card and that's it! You pay normally using cash, debit card, etc.

If you would like a card, contact Marian Orvis at [mforvet@earthlink.net](mailto:mforvet@earthlink.net) or 559.226.0145.

### Next Newsletter: May 2009



Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at [nmtv@att.net](mailto:nmtv@att.net). The deadline for the January newsletter is Thursday, May 7.



## JOIN THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY RENEW

Membership includes the quarterly CNPS journal, *Fremontia*; the quarterly *Bulletin* which gives statewide 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, Limited Income.....\$25
- Individual .....\$45
- Family, Group, or Library.....\$75
- Plant Lover .....\$100
- Patron .....\$300
- Benefactor .....\$600
- Mariposa Lily .....\$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

April 2009



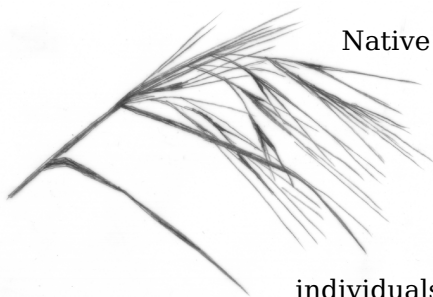
CALIFORNIA NATIVE  
PLANT SOCIETY  
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

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 CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT

### California's Needlegrasses



Native grasslands are some of the most endangered of California's wild places. Increasingly, however, organizations and individuals are recognizing the

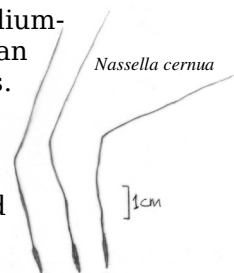
beauty and appropriateness of grasses for restoration and in the garden.

The *Nassella* genus is known as the needlegrasses because their seeds have a long thread-like awn, resembling a needle and thread. They are native to the Western Hemisphere and three species are native to California: Purple (*Nassella pulchra*), Nodding (*Nassella cernua*), and Foothill (*Nassella lepida*). These beautiful bunchgrasses are well-adapted to harsh growing conditions. They are cool-season bunchgrasses because they bloom in spring and are summer dormant. All are easily grown from seed.

Purple needlegrass was declared the California State Grass in 2004. It grows well in deep clay soils and thrives in deep, well-drained soils. In bloom it displays a purple hued seed as befits its name. Tough basal leaves stay green most of the year, thanks to roots that can extend down to 20 feet!

Nodding needlegrass resembles Purple needlegrass. The color of the seed is pink, rather than purple and the awn is generally longer and thinner. It is a very prolific seed producer and is especially adapted to well-drained soils. Both purple and nodding needlegrass can grow to a height 4' or more.

Foothill needlegrass is a small to medium-sized bunchgrass with finer leaves than either Purple or Nodding needlegrass. It has the smallest seed and awn of the three, with the seed almost black. It does not last long on clay or loam soils, doing better in well-drained and rocky soils.





**APRIL 2009**

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**SEQUOIA CHAPTER CNPS**

Clockwise starting at top left

- Black Sage (*Salvia mellifera*)
- California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*)
- Nodding Needlegrass (*Nassella cernua*) and Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*)
- Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*)
- Nodding Needlegrass
- Flannel Bush (*Fremontodendron californicum*)
- Blue Wild Rye (*Elymus glaucus*)

