



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

February 2004

CHAPTER EVENTS

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, February 17. 7:00 p.m.

Serpentine and Rare Plants in the Coast Range with speaker: Julie Delgado, Hollister Field Office Botanist

Julie has worked as both a wildlife biologist and botanist for the U.S. Department of the Interior for the past 16 years. She is currently the Hollister Field Office Botanist. This resource area covers 320,000 acres of the central coast ranges, including approximately 100,000 in West Fresno County. This area is referred to as a land of complexity the dynamic geology, plant community, and rare species diversity.

Her talk will cover most of the resource area with a focus on the New Idria Serpentine Formation. An area in the San Benito Mountain forest is home to a unique forest association – the only known place where four conifers co-occur. Can you guess which 4 species?

Meetings are held at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue) at 7:00 p.m.

Future Meeting Programs

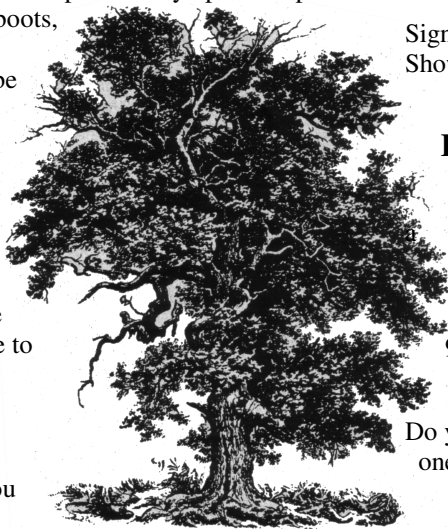
March 16	Gardening with Natives Q. & A. Progress Report: China Creek Project Panel
April 20	Soils and Native Plants. Emily Roberson
May 18	Nim (Mono) Uses of Native Plants. Gaylen Lee
June-August	No programs. Field Trips TBA.

China Creek Field Trip / Workday Saturday, February 28. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

We will meet at the gate at 10:00 and plan to tidy up and explore until about 3:00. Bring rubber boots, gloves, long sleeves, water, snacks and/or lunch. It should be a beautiful day to spend at this special place.

China Creek is located near Centerville. Take 180 East to Smith Road (west fence of Centerville School). Go south on Smith Road for about a mile (cross Rainbow Road) and drive to the pipe barrier/gate.

Would you like to be notified when a workday is planned? Let Warren or Helen know if you would like to have your name on this list. < helshaw@netptc.net >



Home & Garden Show at Big Fresno Fairgrounds Friday – Sunday, March 5-7.

The Sequoia Chapter has a booth every year at this event. It is one of our most visible ways to reach out and expose a large group of Valley folks to the beauty and practicality of native plants and the goals of the Native Plant Society.

We need volunteers to wo(man) the booth in two-hour shifts. You don't have to be an expert. If you appreciate California native plants and have a ready smile, please sign up for a shift or two.

We will have a sign up sheet at the February 17 meeting and can answer any questions about participation in this event. Or you can contact Marian Orvis (226-0415 or mforvet@earthlink.net) to volunteer.

Sign up and get free admission to the entire Home and Garden Show. Not bad for a couple of hours of your time!

Field Trips

A self-guided field trip that would be well worth making is visit to Camp Pashayan to view the restoration project by Steve Starcher and his Central High students.

Camp Pashayan is a right turn off Herndon, just before Hwy 99 and is clearly marked. There is a shelter with picnic tables for lunch or resting.

Do you have an idea for a field trip? Are you're willing to lead one? Contact Joanna Clines at < jclines@fs.fed.us >

It isn't too early to mark down Saturday, September 25, 2004 in your calendar. That is the date of our Native Plant Sale!



RELATED ACTIVITIES

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Classes require reservations and are \$10/person, \$20/family. Call 559/855-3473 or visit their Web site < www.sierrafoothill.org > for more information and registration form. Hikes are free and begin at 9:00 a.m. Call for meeting points and weather information.



Hikes


Wednesday February 18	Discovery Trail at the McKenzie. Easy 3.5 mile round trip.
Saturday February 28	Miller Preserve. A 4-6 mile round trip to the top of Black Mountain and along the ridge, if you wish.
Sunday March 7	Table Top at McKenzie. A moderately strenuous 6 mile round trip
Sunday March 21	Wildflowers at the McKenzie. A moderate hike with stops to identify plants

Classes

Saturday March 6	Photography at the McKenzie Preserve. Tom Tidyman.
Saturday March 13	Geology & Wildflowers of the Tivy Mountain Area. Rodney Olsen, Craig Poole.
Saturday March 20	Wildflowers of the McKenzie Preserve. John Stebbins.

Johnny's Garden Nursery & Outdoor Living Center

Classes require reservations and a minimum of 6 persons. Materials/taxes included in the cost of each class. Call 559/251-5383 for info. and registration. All classes at the Nursery, (6931 E. Belmont, Fresno (SW corner Belmont & Temperance).

Saturday February 7	 Landscape Trees that thrive in our Valley. Leslie Feathers, Arborist and Coordinator of Master Gardening Program.
Saturday February 21	Ornamental Grasses in Your Landscape. Landscaping with native grasses. Presented by the California Native Grass Association.
Saturday February 28	Book signing and luncheon! "Sun-Drenched Gardens" by Jan Smith & Lucinda Lewis. Proceeds to benefit the Clovis Botanical Garden.

"Teach the River"

Saturday & Sunday, February 21-22. Center for Advanced Research Technology (CART) in Clovis. Sponsored by the San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust, and the CA Dept. of Fish and Game. Workshops and field trips related to watershed education. Agenda/registration packet at < www.riverparkway.org >

OBSERVATIONS

February is a great month to observe the transition from winter to spring. The early stages of natives coming out of dormancy or annuals starting their short plant life touches that part of us that responds to the cycle of rebirth and renewal.

Recent Observations (at 2000' in the foothills) are that other than the sprouting of annual -- mostly exotic -- grasses, the first sign of spring is the appearance of fresh green leaves on the twinberry vines (*Lonicera involucrata*). Lower, the first buckeye (*Aesculus californica*) leaves are appearing. Interestingly enough our predominant tree species, the blue oaks (*Quercus douglasii*) are highly individualistic. Most are completely defoliated -- many with terminal buds starting to swell. Some, however, retain last season's leaves -- a few still pretty green.

Blue dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum*) spears are up, some as much as a foot or so. Fiddleneck, filaree, redmaids, miner's lettuce, and other annuals are recognizable but have a way to go before blooming.



Down in the flatlands where it seems fog is always around the corner after a rain, the Redbud (*Cercis occidentalis*) is showing some bud swell and the California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) always seem to get going early.

And the grasses...ahh, the grasses. If you've never planted native grasses from seed or been around a nodding needlegrass (*Nassella cernua*) or other two and three-awn grasses when their seeds drive themselves into the ground, you're missing a treat. In some recent planting projects, the combination of water and a sunny day on newly planted seed fooled me again. What was that movement seen in my peripheral vision? It was many awns rotating and driving their seeds into the carefully prepared soil.

The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do.

--Galileo Galilei (ca. 1600)

January Workday at China Creek

We had a good turnout this time. As usual, we picked up trash and tidied up around the entrance kiosk (and noted that someone has removed—stolen?—the Plexiglas from it). Madeleine Mitchell and crew raked leaves and generally gave the area a cared-for look.

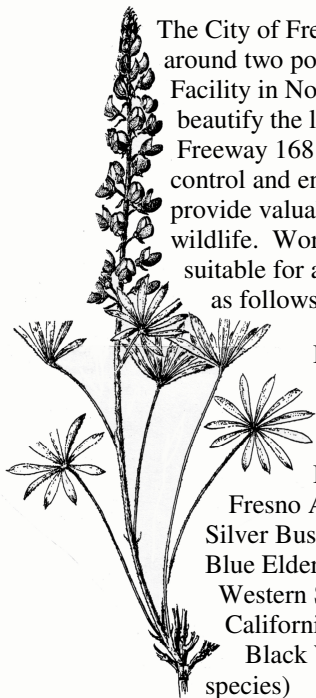
We concluded there wasn't much we could do about the yellow star thistle, since it was all dead, and disturbing it could only serve to disperse more seed. We did, however, walk over much of the south, 80 acre "leg" of the park where the infestation seems worst, and attempt a guesstimate of the area. Our pooled guess was that 20 to 30 acres is now pretty thoroughly covered.

At Dr. Howard Latimer's suggestion we did not try to do much about a plant list, since virtually all the annuals and perennials were either dead or dormant. Being basically "plant people," as Jeanne Larson says, we didn't attempt any serious bird listing but did keep a rough list of birds recognized, including probable sightings of a phainopepla and a bald eagle.

Also at Howard's suggestion some of us explored part of the north 60-acre leg of the park, much of which is in riparian forest, and discovered some incredibly beautiful glades, and, happily, little YST (yellow star thistle).

Probably the most important event of the day was that we met Hank Urbach, a neighboring landowner, who has been a supporter and defender of the park for years. It seems he and we have common goals for the park and should prove staunch allies.

Native Plants at Leaky Acres!



The City of Fresno is undertaking a pilot project using native plants around two ponds at the Leaky Acres Ground Water Recharge Facility in Northeast Fresno. The plants will be used to stabilize and beautify the levees around the two ponds in closest proximity to Freeway 168 and Ashlan Avenue. In addition to providing erosion control and enhancing the beauty of the ponds, the plants will provide valuable nesting and food for many bird species and other wildlife. Working with local native plant experts, a list of plants suitable for a riparian environment has been developed. The list is as follows:

- Buttonwillow (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)
- Creeping Wild Rye (*Leymus triticoides*)
- Rush (*Juncus effusus*)
- Deer grass (*Muhlenbergia rigens*)
- Barbara Sedge (*Carex barbara*)
- Fresno Ash (*Fraxinus latifolia*)
- Silver Bush Lupine (*Lupinus albifrons*)
- Blue Elderberry (*Sambucus mexicanus*)
- Western Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*)
- California Wild Rose (*Rosa californica*)
- Black Willow and other native riparian willows (*Salix* species)



In addition to the plants listed above, annual wildflowers are being sown to provide color. **Volunteers are welcomed!**

Anyone interested or for more in information, contact Joseph Oldham at 237-2926 or 621-1106 or Betty Comelisen at 439-2267.

January Chapter Meeting



California Fescue
(*Festuca californica*)

Craig Poole's presentation on the Geology of the Sierra Nevada was enjoyed by a full house. Using a combination of slides, history, and direct experience, Craig described the long past of the Sierra Nevada. He started with the very early days (over 100 million years ago) when most of the western U.S. was covered by ocean, continued through the formation of our beloved granite, its erosion, and the emergence of the mountains themselves.

Interspersed were examples of evidence used by geologists to identify the historical changes: huge boulders of one type of rock sitting atop a rock with a completely different composition, fossilized ocean creatures, aerial views of other table mountains, and the tilt of our local Table Mountain in relationship to the Sierra. And you thought Table Mountain was flat!

To underscore the continuing geological changes, Craig showed centers of earthquake activity and a particularly interesting concentration of carbon dioxide in the soil in an area at the base of Mammoth Mountain. The high level of CO₂ has been killing the trees in that area since 1990.

Craig also supplied an explanation of soil that most people are familiar with: hardpan. All very interesting and informative.

Woodward Park Kiosk Update

We now have a presence at the kiosk! Next time you're at Woodward Park, check out our section of the kiosk. We hope to maintain an eye-catching, current, and interesting display. If you have suggestions for features to be included in the display, contact Thelma Valdez at [<nmtv@att.net>](mailto:nmtv@att.net).

Newsletter

Would you like to contribute an article or have an event publicized in this newsletter? What about your "Observations"? Please send me a brief email or a longer commentary about your native plant experiences and observations.

Submissions must be received by Saturday, March 4 for the next Carpenteria. Contact Thelma Valdez at [<nmtv@att.net>](mailto:nmtv@att.net)



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Emily B. Roberson < EmilyR@cnp.org >

Conservation Groups Sue Interior Department

January 15, 2004. Chico, CA - The Butte Environmental Council, the California Native Plant Society, and Defenders of Wildlife have filed a complaint against the U.S. Department of the Interior over its decision to eliminate more than one million acres in habitat for 15 endangered and threatened vernal pool plants and animals found in California and Oregon. On August 6, 2003, a final Interior rule designated only 740,000 acres of critical habitat for the species, one million acres short of what was proposed in the draft rule.

We are confident that the courts will restore the substantial acreage that was removed by the Interior Department in Washington,² stated Barbara Vlamis, executive Director of Butte Environmental Council. ³The Bush administration's attempts to undermine the laws of the land through smoke and mirror justification is being rejected from coast to coast,² she continued. Congress and the courts have demonstrated time

and again the intent and significance of the critical habitat requirement of the Endangered Species Act, such as Senator Garn of Utah's comment in 1978 when he stated, "designation of critical habitat is more important than the designation of endangered species itself" (Wiygul and Weiner 1999; Congressional Research Service 1982).

If recovery is to occur, the remaining range of the 15 vernal pool species must not only be protected, it must expand. Eight endangered and seven threatened species are currently listed due to the severity of vernal pool destruction in California and Oregon. As the Proposed Rule indicates, Holland estimates that close to 75% of the Central Valley's vernal pool habitat was lost by 1997; the central coast has lost at a minimum 90%; southern California's losses exceed 95%; and Oregon has had 60% destroyed with 18% of the extant habitat considered intact (2002). More recent estimates place the habitat losses at over 90% throughout the historic range of vernal pools (Wright 2002).

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



My last message as President. (sigh) But I'll be around as Past-President and Recording Secretary, so it isn't that easy to get rid of me!

Looking back at my first President's message in January 2003, my priority was revising the ByLaws. Now, I'm not so sure. The attempt to revise a portion thereof last Fall was not easily accomplished, certainly not by a committee of one person -me. I figure if you have ByLaws, they should be adhered to. If revisions are made, will those be adhered to? The difficulty in

doing so includes a small group of members that step up to volunteer each year and end up staying on ad infinitum. This is not unusual for most chapters unfortunately. I can't speak for the other chapters, but I appreciate the folks in our Chapter that have been faithful in keeping it alive some serving in dual roles. Sure hope they aren't close to burn-out... Please consider yourself welcome to participate in any activity of our Chapter at any time. You'll have a good time...honest!

-- Marian Orvis

INCOMING PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I approach this job with mixed feelings.

I'm pleased that the nominating committee felt enough confidence in my abilities to put my name on the ballot and it appears you have elected me. Thank you.

On the other hand I'm intimidated by the fact that I've always been a better follower than leader, and by the many responsibilities I see looming ahead. Three big challenges spring to mind immediately.

* One, we will be co hosting the state CNPS Chapter Council meeting in June, we will be nagging many of you for help with refreshments, transportation, and "guide" services.

* Two, the China Creek project will require ongoing work and thought. We hope to form a subcommittee for planning, and develop a list of willing workers to execute "the plan."

* Three, looking back over the past year, I'm impressed by what the chapter accomplished: our message was represented with displays, literature and knowledgeable people at

numerous public events around the area. We carried out a highly successful Native Plant Sale. We published a newsletter every "active" month and even got out a "summer" issue during the June-August hiatus. We sent representatives to state chapter council meetings. We got at least a toehold on a major educational project at China Creek. We held monthly meetings with a wide variety of informative and interesting programs—and much more. All this despite the fact that our active membership is shrinking (and aging). I see outreach as the third challenge for the chapter this year. Any ideas?

My thanks to outgoing president Marian Orvis for all her hard work. My thanks also to Thelma Valdez to whose capable hands Helen and I have passed our "baby," the chapter newsletter.

Happy New Year to all; I look forward to working with you in the noble cause of "the preservation of the California native flora."

-- Warren Shaw





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.



SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS



President	Warren Shaw	30400 Watts Valley Road Tollhouse, CA 93667	559/855-4519 (h) helshaw@netptc.net
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Rare Plant	John Stebbins	357 Adler Clovis, CA 93612-0780	559/278-2179 (w) johnst@csufresno.edu
Conservation Co-chairs	Karen Dulik Jeanne Larson (see above)	223 E Weldon Fresno, CA 93704	559/243-9881 kdulik@wter.ca.gov

CARPENTERIA

January 2004



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 >

FEATURED PLANT

Buttonwillow



Cephalanthus occidentalis a, flower. b, fruit

From "*FOREST TREES OF THE PACIFIC SLOPE*" by
George Sudworth (1908), originally published by the Forest
Service Department

Cephalanthus occidentalis californicus, commonly known as Buttonwillow, is not a true willow, but is so called because its leaf shape is willow-like. It is a shrub that ranges in size from a 3 foot bush to a 15 foot tree.

New growth is red or bronze. Older leaves are glossy green, 3-6 inches in length, and like the young branches, often grow in whorls of three or more.

Its most notable feature is the creamy white 1-2" nearly spherical flowers that bloom throughout the summer. Bees and many types of butterflies are attracted to these flowers.

In the fall its foliage turns bright yellow with some orange. The dry seeds are eaten by water birds. As with willows, it prefers wet areas.

Buttonwillow is one of the plants that is slated to be planted at the Leaky Acres project described in this month's newsletter.

