



Please Note:

After many years as Newsletter editor, Thelma Valdez is taking over the responsibilities of Membership Chair and will also be building and maintaining a chapter website. Helen and Warren Shaw, recognizing Thelma's great job as Editor, and knowing it will be a tough act to follow, will edit the Newsletter, starting with this issue. Many thanks to Thelma for all her fine work in the past and for the new challenge she's taking on.

China Creek Update - Warren Shaw

102 degrees, with higher-than-usual humidity had been predicted. Only two people from the Volunteer list had responded to the reminder. I was a little hopeful, though, because one, Ingrid Carmean, had promised to bring homemade peach ice cream for break, a fact I had shared with the other volunteers. When I got to the park gate, about 7:30, there were two cottontails sitting in the road, as if expecting me. I chose to take this as a good sign.

I set up the little folding table for the water jug, the coffee pot and other refreshments, along with a couple of chairs. By the time I had this done, I was feeling warm enough that I decided to have a cup of coffee while it still sounded good. Then people started arriving, and soon there were eight of us, all busy people with other obligations (one—Christine Rainbolt—a young mother had left her 11-month-old daughter with her husband to join us).



Paul Mitchell and YST

We were taking a new approach. Since most Yellow Star Thistle plants are now in nearly full bloom, with each plant capable of producing hundreds—maybe even thousands—of viable seed, we could no longer just uproot or cut plants, so we were piling them on the blacktop to cover with plastic in hopes of killing the seed by “solarizing.” This is a laborious process, and by 12:00, we were hot, tired, and not completely finished, but had a good pile to show for our morning's work, and if the method is successful, will have kept tens (hundreds?) of thousands of YST seeds out of the seed bank.

We also saw that the test area which Park friend, Steve McDonald, had sprayed for us is still nearly completely devoid of YST. We hope to seed this area with native grasses this fall to compete with the YST while it's somewhat depleted. We noted one grass, apparently *Leymus triticoides*, seems to be doing well in some areas, and might be a candidate. Hank Urbach, who had recently mowed the trail, so it is quite walkable, mowed some of the less mature stands of YST.

One sad note: Don Martin, an old friend and stalwart Park Volunteer, informed us he has an eye condition which will prevent his driving and doing stoop labor. We'll miss you, Don; take care of yourself and stay in touch.

Oh, and the peach ice cream ... Absolutely Delicious!

➡ **Next workday – August 2**

Water-wise Plant Sale and Fair

Saturday, September 25, 2010, 8am-2pm

As we have for the past several years, CNPS will be selling California native plants alongside Clovis Botanical Garden who will be selling water-wise plants from other areas. This joint effort has served us well by introducing California natives to a wide range of attendees who may not have considered natives before.

This is also a call for volunteers to help unload and organize the plants and set up canopies on Friday evening. Saturday's volunteers will be directing customers to the

cashier, helping customers out with their purchases, and generally being a smiling face. We also appreciate volunteers who have used natives in your garden and are comfortable talking to customers about your experiences. Do you only have a couple of hours to spare? That's fine. Even a few hours can be a great help.



• Contact Marian Orvis at mforvet@earthlink.net or 559.226.0145 if you can help.

Belinda's Wildflower Garden

Jane Pritchard

Thelma and her mother Flora picked up my old bicycling friend Fiona and me for the trip to Ahwahnee. We stopped for breakfast at Subway in Coarsegold. They have a nongreasy Denver omelet sandwich and coffee for \$2. The service is extremely friendly with a background of eastern Indian music suitable for meditation and incense.

Belinda's place is at 2000' elevation. She started reintroducing native plants in 1993 and estimates that it's back to 40% of the original. It is much better than that.

To the north behind her house, trees still bear scars from a fire in 1959. *Claytonia perfoliata* has a mold problem in wet years – very surprising to me. Patches of Chinese houses were the tallest I have ever seen. Native grasses included *Bromus carinatus*, *Nasella pulchra*, *Vulpia microstachys*, *Elymus glaucus*, *Melica californica*, *Muhlenbergia rigens*, and meadow barley.

Epilobium canum (nee *Zauschneria*), Spanish lotus, a rare white-flowered *Monardella*, *Arctostaphylos hookeri* (manzanita), *Linanthus montanus*, *L. ciliate*, *L. bicolor*, miniature, sky-blue and chick lupines, red maids, wand buckwheat, woolly marbles, golden yarrow, globe gilia, *Thysanocarpus curvipes*, *Lasthenia californica*, *Pseudobahia*, bird's-eye gilia, a small *Clarkia*, California poppies, rock rose, *Antirrhynnum*, *Collinsia tinctoria*, and blooming baby blue eyes covered the sunny slopes to the west and south.



Mimulus torreyi

Observations

Thelma Valdez, in the Fresno/Clovis area, speaks for all when she says, "Dormant. That defines a California summer at our place for sure. Mediterranean dormancy isn't like east coast or midwest dormancy. Plants stay green but they pull out all the stops for conserving moisture and protecting their leaves from the hot sun. Growth is minimized with the exception of some flowering species like California Fuchsia and Desert Willow. Everything seems quiet. Enjoy the cooler mornings. Lay low during the heat of the day. Emerge to enjoy the beautiful evenings. California native plants, insects, and animals seem to follow a summer pattern that isn't hard to understand."

In the foothills it's finally summer. The blue oaks have turned "blue," which makes them more drought tolerant, and the sycamores have finally been able to leaf out, as the hot dry weather has defeated the anthracnose.

A couple of different (unkeyed) miner's lettuce plants grew under a shade tree. In addition to the invasive Australian clover *Trifolium subterraneum*, Belinda has rancheria clover, *Trifolium ciliata*, and *T. micranthus* (small-headed clover). A moist drainage area east of the house had toad rush, common monkey-flower, a small yellow monkey-flower, white-top clover, and woolly mullein.

Thelma and I took a few samples to identify later at home. (Still waiting on my part. I am in MO for my 50th high school reunion. Once my sister asked if I would ever move back to MO. My reply: "Only if I get Alzheimer's." Ticks, chiggers, venomous snakes that don't rattle, and no mountains.)

We went inside for coffee and Aussie bites (delicious little muffins made of seeds, nuts and dried fruit). Belinda took the quilt she was sewing off the table to make room for our books. She and I got down to serious business and keyed *Mimulus torreyi* and *M. bolanderi*. The others were twiddling their thumbs. To delay leaving I had them look at flowers through loupes. Flora was absolutely enthralled. (Magnify a five-spot next spring.)

Well, so much left to key, so little time. We reluctantly said our grateful goodbyes and left Belinda alone amid her beautiful flowers.

Annual grasses are brown and dry, and the most prominent blooming plants are milkweed, which are humming with pollinators. Doveweed is popping up, and sticky tarweed is pungent, though not yet in bloom.

On a 4th of July trip to Shaver, The Shaws noted masses of Farewell to Spring and *Clarkia elegans* at about 4000'. Bright blue *Ceanothus*, orange Wallflower and other late spring blooms were common as we climbed.

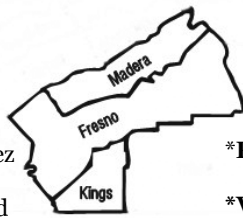
Jeanne Larson says, "As I was sweeping up the dried blossoms and some fine leaves that daily fall from my Desert Willow, I am thinking that this wonderful tree is not for the neat gardener. The "trash" makes wonderful mulch, and the joy of watching the hummers and big black bees is worth all of the cleanup."



Membership

Thelma Valdez

If you require corrections or additions to your membership information, contact Thelma Valdez at nmtv@unwiredbb.com
The Sequoia chapter serves Fresno, Madera, and Kings counties.



SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

*New Members and Membership Renewals (June)

Fresno : Britz, Siegfried
Madera : *Warner
Kings : Arroues
Out of Area : Odell (Martinez); Snyder (Davis)

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, 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.

Did you know?...

ACR 173 is a resolution that would make the third week of April California Native Plant Week, pointing out that landscaping and gardening with native plants can cut residential water use from 60 – 90% over conventional gardening. A specific experiment conducted by the City of Santa Monica showed a 77% decrease in household water use.

Support and stay up-to-date on the status of ACR 173 as it wends its way through the legislative process – you can do this by visiting the cnps.org and clicking on the Legislation Tracker.
(from CNPS E-News June 2010)

If Temperance flat dam is built,

- 8.8 - The number of miles of the San Joaquin River that would be inundated. [That's 17.6 mi. of riparian vegetation]
- 155 - The number of culturally significant historic sites destroyed.
- 4756 - The number of acres of habitat [of native plants] destroyed.

*From the Planning and Conservation League newsletter
CALIFORNIA TODAY, JUNE 2010*

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Next Newsletter: September 2010



Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw at helshaw@netptc.net. The deadline for the September newsletter is Friday, September 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: _____

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

New Member

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- Plant Lover \$100
- Patron \$300
- Benefactor \$600
- Mariposa Lily \$1500

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

Summer 2010



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.

MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Erigonum giganteum

Madeleine Mitchell

I've chosen for our summer issue: *Eriogonum giganteum*, or common name, St. Catherine's Lace. It is one of over 125 *Eriogonum*s that are native to California. They are found from seashore to alpine peaks, from annuals to shrubs. This species is found on the Channel Islands and as indicated by its species name one of the larger growing "buckwheats" (common name of the genus). It's in full bloom now with large white clusters of flowers, each about 6" in diameter. They will slowly change color over the summer and be rust colored by fall. The sprays of flowers dry nicely and are used in dry arrangements. They remain whatever color they are when they're picked



The shrub grows from 4-8 ft tall and wide, but in my small native garden it's crowded next to a Cleveland Sage and shaded by a large Toyon, so it's not getting full sun any longer. I planted it over 10 years ago; so don't consider moving it now. All buckwheats attract a variety of beneficial insects and butterflies, plus pollen for bees and seed for birds. They are also drought tolerant and easy to care for.



Clockwise from top left

- Solarizing Yellow Star Thistle
- Tarantula Hawk, et.al. on Milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa?*)
- Woolly Blue Curls (*Trichostema lanatum*)
- Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*)
- Buckwheat (*Eriogonum giganteum*)
- China Creek workers taking an ice cream break

SUMMER 2010



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