



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

January 2005

CHAPTER EVENTS

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, January 18. 7:00 p.m.

“The State of the Sierra National Forest Botany Program 2005” with Forest Botanist Joanna Clines

Board meeting starts promptly at 6:00 pm. All members are welcome to attend the board meeting. Regular meeting and speaker are at 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue).

Much has happened since the last time Joanna spoke to the chapter about the Sierra National Forest botany program. Joanna will give a slide presentation focused on highlights that chapter members NEED to hear (and she promises to sprinkle it with beautiful flower photos to get you thinking of Spring).



Highlights included in Tuesday’s Presentation

- Big changes in Forest Service Land Management Planning: The 2004 Planning Rule makes sweeping changes in how the Forest Service implements the provisions of the National Forest Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The new rule is controversial, and has implications for conservation of rare plants and plant communities, as well as invasive species. The rule can be viewed online in the Federal Register at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/includes/rule%20.pdf> >
- Progress in the War on Weeds - no, we are not losing the battle, or the war, YET! Encouraging news from the Sierra National Forest and the Sierra-San Joaquin Noxious Weed Alliance (of which CNPS is a signatory)
- Progress in developing "seed zones" similar to those developed for forest trees for several species of native grasses commonly used for revegetation and restoration. The Sierra NF is participating in a common garden study involving 7 national forests.
- Hydro Power Relicensing efforts: the Sierra is deeply immersed in the process of issuing new licenses for many of our hydro facilities. These efforts offer unique opportunities to require license conditions focused on rare plant conservation, revegetation using locally native plants, and prevention and control of invasive weeds.
- Sensitive Plant List. Several species will be added, and we'd love to show you photos so you can help us look for them!
- Research Natural Area designation: A 4200 acre blue-oak woodland RNA will soon be designated by the Regional Forester in the Kings River drainage, at Secate Ridge.

This will take about an hour 1.25 hours to summarize!

China Creek Update

By Warren Shaw

Work is proceeding on the interpretive trail. Heart redwood posts are milled and will be delivered to Sanger High for numbering.

Some of our highly-qualified botanists -- Howard Latimer, Joanna Clines, Nur Ritter, and Mary McClanahan -- have agreed to do the field work on the 15 stations by February 1. We plan also to rely on previous work by John Stebbins. I'm hoping we can get the brochures written and illustrated by mid-March so the trail can be officially opened to the public around Earth Day.

We're also making some progress toward a grazing trial for yellow star thistle abatement in the northeast block. Local cattleman Steve McDonald has agreed to provide stock, neighbor Hank Urbach will help keep track of the cows, and the county has tentatively agreed to cooperate -- provided liability insurance requirements can be satisfied. Tentative dates are March 15 - May 15. A workday to repair fences and protect vulnerable plants is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 19th.

That's the good news. The bad news is that our grant application was denied. Education chair Peggy Jones has already located other potential sources of funding for the project and is working on applications, so all is not lost.

YST in the park is finally brown, (though there was impressive regrowth and bloom and, of course, seed production, even after 2 mowings by Vulcan Materials last spring). We should have a couple of months to rest before we take up that battle again.

It's a big project with many facets. If you are willing to be notified by email of upcoming workdays, field trips, and other events, please contact me at <warshaw@netptc.net> to have your name added to the list.

(China Creek, an undeveloped Fresno County Park near Centerville on the Kings River, is a Sequoia Chapter restoration and educational project area.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As chapter president I was recently asked to write a brief description of the Sequoia chapter for Fremontia, including its history and current activities. (The final version is scheduled to appear in the April issue with several other chapters' history.) We were asked to keep the length to two or three hundred words.

Knowing little of the Sequoia chapter's history I turned to Jeanne Larson for help. She was able to provide me with not only a general outline, but, amazingly, a binder full of early newsletters.

Armed with this information and my knowledge of the chapter's recent activities, I wrote my first draft, trying to be brief. It came to around 500 words. I set about tightening it up, and in the process, cut the names of several people who had made important contributions, trying to leave, "just the facts, ma'am." The result was sketchy and skeletal and still too long. I sent it in "fat."

I assume some of what I felt was vital, especially individual contributions, will end up on the cutting room floor. This is a shame because, of course, the nature, both past and present, of any organization—particularly a voluntary one—derives from its people. I don't know what the published article in Fremontia will include, but here are some facts that I would like to have included and want to make sure current chapter members know.

Many of the original members from the 70's are still active—are in fact still among those who can be depended on to attend meetings, staff tables at events, take offices, manage logistics, show up for workdays and field trips, and so on. Despite the risk of leaving people out, I feel compelled to give some examples here.

Marian Orvis has been secretary many times, as well as membership chair, and later, president. Jeanne Larson has held many offices—President 1983-1991 at least (that's as far as the old newsletters go). During much of that time she also edited the newsletter. She resumed the presidency in '00 for another 2 years and has served many years as treasurer and membership chair or co-chair.

John Stebbins, current Rare Plant chair, has chaired several committees over the years: field trips, conservation, and perhaps others, and with Jeanne spearheaded the effort to preserve the McKenzie Table under the auspices of the Sierra Foothill Conservancy.

Paul and Madeleine Mitchell's names don't show up in the old newsletters much, but both have been active in many ways since the chapter's early days. Dr. Howard Latimer, present Horticulture chair, is another early member who is still very active. I'm sure there are others I should have included among these long active members and, of course, many of the early stalwarts have moved on, fallen away, or passed on, but those I have cited remain to carry on the chapter's work.

Fortunately, we also have a growing number of members whose strength and energy have been added to the steady efforts of the "originals."

It's all about the people.

-- Warren Shaw

NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

Dr. Michael Kunz presented the November Chapter meeting attendees with his Sequoia Monument talk – essentially the same one given at the June Chapter Council Meeting at SciCon. And a wonderful talk it was.

He took us through the history of the sequoias through the travels of John Muir. By the time John Muir explored the sequoia groves (he first went through the Tule Drainage in the Southern Sequoias in 1875), the big trees were already famous. In the north, logging had begun.. The path that John Muir had traveled in 1875 and 1877 eventually became the path the lumber companies used to remove the felled trees. By 1905, logging had been going on for 15 years and most of the big trees in the Indian Basin had been logged and the company that did the milling had gone bankrupt

Logging continued into the 1980 and was finally halted in 1987. In 2000, the Forest Service was supposed to set out a management plan, and in 2003 they decided on one that mimics the Bush Administration's "Healthy Forest" Initiative.

It is wise to remember that the Sierra National Monument is more than just for maintaining the giant sequoias, but is meant to cover all the diversity of the area. Dr. Kunz shared photos, both of the natural beauty of the Monument, and of the tragic devastation as a result of "management" decisions made by mankind.



FRESNO CITY PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE

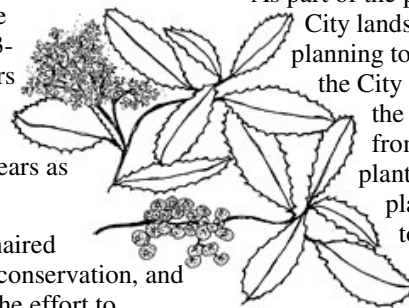
As part of the project to incorporate native plants into Fresno City landscaping, the Assistant Public Works Director is planning to landscape two demonstration median islands in the City with low water use native plants. His plan is for the City to purchase the plants, but ask volunteers from CNPS to assist with the plant selection and planting. These "demonstration" islands would be planted in February to coincide with a presentation to the City Council on low water use landscaping using native plants. In addition, a field trip is being planned to Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden to educate City Public Works staff on native plants and to see diverse full-grown specimens in a garden setting.

This project is an exciting opportunity to make a difference in our community! CNPS is being asked to get involved and our support is crucial in this project. Hopes are to build a coalition of groups such as CNPS, Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Upper Kings River Water Forum, and others that will support this project and make their voices heard to the City Council. It will be a tough, slow, uphill battle; there is and will be great resistance on the part of developers, landscape architects, etc. However, the rewards will be worth the effort!

Specific dates for planting activities, City Council presentations, and meetings will be forthcoming when I know them.

2005 could be a great year for the Sequoia CNPS Chapter!!

-- Joseph Oldham
Conservation Co-Chair



RELATED ACTIVITIES

Sierra Foothill Conservancy

Classes

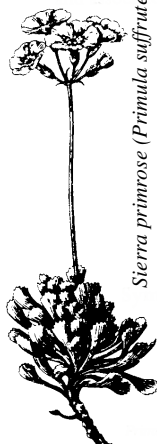
Classes require early reservations (\$10/person, \$20/family). Space is limited. Bring lunch and water for daytime classes. Visit <www.sierrafoothill.org> for more information, registration, and changes/additions or call 559/855-3473.

Saturday March 5	Mushrooms of the Sierra Foothills. At the McKenzie Preserve with local mushroom expert Russell Kokx. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Saturday March 19	Wildflowers of the McKenzie Preserve. With botanist John Stebbins, this popular class is held at the height of the wildflower season on the Preserve. Includes a strenuous hike to the top of the table to see vernal pool species and great scenery. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Hikes

Hikes are free, led by experienced volunteers, not limited in size, and begin at 9:00 a.m. Call for meeting points, weather information, and possible cancellations.

Sunday January 16	Black Mountain. To summit or optionally out along the ridge. 4 or 6 miles.
Saturday January 22	McKenzie Loop. 7 miles and very strenuous.
Sunday January 23	McKenzie Table top. 6 miles.
Saturday January 29	Tivy Peak. 6 miles cross country, steep, very strenuous
Sunday January 30	McKenzie Smith Basin. 6 miles, very strenuous.
Saturday February 5	McKenzie archeological hike. Easy 2 miles.
Saturday February 12	Black Mountain. To summit or out along the ridge. 4 or 6 miles.
Sunday February 13	McKenzie Loop. 7 miles and very strenuous.
Saturday February 19	McKenzie Table top. 6 miles
Saturday February 26	McKenzie Smith Basin. 6 miles, very strenuous.



Sierra primrose (*Primula suffrutescens*)

Jepson Herbarium Public Programs

Workshops are taught by recognized authorities in their field. Most workshops are designed to accommodate beginners as well as professionals. For a full schedule, descriptions, and registration, visit <<http://ucjeps.berkeley.edu/jepwkshp.html>>.

Saturday & Sunday March 12-13	Intro to Morphology and Identification of Flowering Plants
Saturday & Sunday March 19-20	Basics of Botanical Illustration
Saturday & Sunday January 29-30	Photoshop for Botanical Photographers
Saturday & Sunday March 26-27	Intro to Digital Macro-Photography Techniques.



Elections for Sequoia Chapter Officers

It's time to vote for the four officer positions in our chapter. A ballot is included in this newsletter. It is being distributed later than desirable, so please mail it the day you receive the newsletter. We will likely get your vote by Tuesday.

Of course, you can also bring your ballot to Tuesday's meeting. In either case, please take a minute to vote. It shows the Officers and the Board that you are out there, even if you are not able to attend meetings or be an active member.

State Asks for Input on Parks

Fresno Bee, 12/30/04

State parks officials are asking for people to e-mail their suggestions to Nina Gordon, chief of state parks planning division at <ngordon@parks.ca.gov>. This presents a good opportunity to ask that the Madera County side of the San Joaquin River be preserved from Friant Dam to Madera Avenue north of Kerman in Fresno County.

If you have other areas that you wish to mention, please do, but let's not let this opportunity pass to comment on the San Joaquin River beltway in Madera County.

-- Jeanne Larson
Conservation Co-Chair

University of California Cooperative Extension Class at Riverview Ranch

Drought Tolerant Landscaping for Mountain, Foothill, and Valley Homes.

Wednesday, April 13, 2005, 9:30 – 12:00. Learn basic techniques to establish or convert to a drought tolerant landscape in Central California locations. Bonnie Bladen from Intermountain Nursery will discuss general guidelines and answer specific questions about plants, soils, watering systems and procedures to start using less water in your yard.

Pre-registration is by mail (\$10 to UCCE, 1720 S. Maple Ave., Fresno, CA 93702.) <cefresno.ucdavis.edu> or 559/456-7285.

“Edible Natives” Brochure

We are looking for personal experiences and recipes from those of you who enjoy eating and cooking wild native plants. Perhaps you nibble on Miner's Lettuce or use some of the many native herbs in cooking. Maybe you can share recipes or stories told to you by your elders. Whichever native plants you've enjoyed eating, email Thelma Valdez at <nmtv@att.net> with your experiences. Our goal is to produce a brochure of local edible native plants.

New Publication:

Giants Among the Forests

Three Forests Interpretive Association announces a pre-sale 25% discount offer on Gene Rose's new book, “*Giants Among the Forests.*” Book orders will be filled by March 1, 2005. Prices include tax. Before February 1, hardbound \$22.50, paperbound \$14.45. (Prices after February 1 will be \$30. and \$19.25.) Mail orders with your check to 3 Forests Interpretive Association, 30330 Watts Valley Rd, Tollhouse, CA 93667.

Volunteer's Corner

- **Volunteer hours.** If you volunteered for any CNPS events in 2004, please email Warren at < warshaw@netptc.net > with the number of hours and the events.
- **CNPS Sequoia Chapter Native Plant Sale**, typically in September. Consider growing natives in 4" pots for sale – they are 100% profit! Contact Jeanne Larson for additional information. 559/243-0815 or email <jrjlars@aol.com>
- **Fresno Home and Garden Show** on Friday - Sunday, March 4-6 at the Fresno Fairgrounds. Each year (this year is the 19th!) this event grows in popularity with increasing exhibits and attendance. Our Chapter is offered a booth, gratis, to spread the word for our beloved California native plants. If you would like to partake in this year's free fun, contact Marian Orvis, 226-0145. You'll be glad you did!

- A joint "**River Walk**" with El Rio Reyes Trust in April (date and opportunities to volunteer TBA).
- **China Creek Workday** tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 19th to repair fences and protect vulnerable plants.
- **Teach the River Symposium for Teachers** on Saturday, February 26, 9 am-3 pm at CART (Center for Advanced Research and Technologies in Clovis). A five-year old event, this is attended by formal and non-formal environmental educators from across the San Joaquin Valley. It creatively presents information about river studies and watershed related issues in a weekend setting. Saturday includes classes for participants. Sunday is for field trips. Our Chapter has an information table on Saturday. Sign up with Marian Orvis at 226-0145.

Quarterly Chapter Council meeting in Berkeley

December 2004 by Warren Shaw

The big issues included the announcement of several resignations from staff: Paul Maas, sales manager; Mike Tomlinson, Development Director and Bulletin Editor; Emily Roberson, Senior Land Management; and Linda Vorobik, Fremontia editor. New people are in place or being sought. Vice chair Jim Bishop announced the board was down to 10 members and that he was leaving to be replaced by Lynne Houser.

The Orange County chapter shared the MAD (Move, Adapt or Die) native plant educational materials they developed in cooperation with the county schools for use by 3rd grade classes. This is an outstanding program that I hope we can emulate (Move and Adapt) for local use. The theme of the afternoon chapter presentations was "Restoration, Re-vegetation or Gardening? Horticultural Issues & Experiences with Preserves, Habitats and Public Gardens." (whew!)

The Channel Islands chapter described their ambitious project, a native plant nursery. Celia Kucher has a great deal of experience and provided many practical suggestions in her presentation "Some Thoughts about Native Plantings in Public Gardens."

Director Vern Goering gave an update on legislative and governmental issues. Some conclusions from his talk: the recent election produced little change in California's stance on environmental issues, state water committees are dominated by Central Valley people not sympathetic to environmental needs, "smart" growth is an idea that is gaining favor, and it isn't yet clear how much damage Proposition 64 will cause.

Executive Director Pam Muick announced a statewide series of conservation meetings to clarify conservation goals. Dates and places will be announced in January.

The evening program, co-presented by climate researcher Connie Millar and Vegetation Ecologist/Cal Flora founder Ann Dennis, was "Climates Past and Present," and "The Lives of Plants," scientific studies of past climate cycles. One conclusion: our current global warming trend may have started with the clearing of forests in colonial times, but cycles are complex and may not be as directly attributable to human activity as it seems.

As always at these meetings the agenda was extremely crowded, and a great deal of business at levels ranging from logistical detail to high-level philosophy was conducted, and space limitations preclude doing justice to all the work accomplished.

OBSERVATIONS



8 inches and counting! And January isn't even half over yet. Of course I'm referring to the rain and that's the amount for the 2004-05 rainy season down in the Fresno/Clovis area where the average annual rainfall is only 10". The Sequoia Chapter encompasses an area with a wide range of rainfall averages due to the wide range of altitude. From the low of 10" in Fresno to an average of 24" in Auberry and 33" in North Fork, it means we also have a great diversity of native plants within a short driving distance.

Although Central California's native plants found in our dry areas are adapted to minimal moisture, these stretches of drought or near-drought can test their hardiness. So when the rain is above average, watch out!

At Joseph Oldham's home in Fresno, he says the Pajaro manzanita is in already in bloom, creosote bushes are putting out new growth, the alders are blooming, and the mulefat is extremely fragrant. "The yard is soaked, but everything is growing great. It should be a fantastic spring!"

In the foothills, Warren Shaw reports that November's hard freezes slowed the growth of annual grasses, which had sprung up after the late October rains. The frost also turned blue oak leaves dull gold then brown.

"Hard December rains finished the defoliation process and now we can see more of our neighbors' junk piles than we really want to. But we can also see roosting redtails much more clearly.

Wet, relatively warm days have also sprouted spring plants: fiddleneck, little annual lupine, blue dicks, Ethurial's spear and many others—quite early it seems."



In the flat lands between the foothills and the cities, the fog has prevented much early blooming, but hasn't slowed the growth during these warm, wet weeks. Our "back 4" is covered with the leaves that precede blue dicks and harvest brodiaea. The elderberries are pushing new growth and there are varieties of mushrooms I've never seen before. The needlegrasses are beautiful and lush and it looks like we're in for a huge crop of miner's lettuce.

-- Editor

CNPS Job Announcement

Seasonal Botany/Ecology Positions - Spring/Summer 2005

CNPS is seeking applicants for six Botanist/Ecologist Positions for spring/summer 2005. Successful candidates will participate in a Sierra Nevada Foothill vegetation survey and classification project in collaboration with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) Resource Assessment Program.

Candidates will be hired as either Team Leaders (three positions) or Field Assistants (three positions), depending on qualifications and experience. The potential start date for employment is late February, 2005. The main office for the project will be in Sacramento, California, with field travel to sites in the northern Sierra Nevada Foothills. The closing deadline for applications is January 14, 2005.

If you are interested in applying for one of these positions please visit www.cnps.org to view full job announcement and application details.

Newsletter

Send your perspectives, wonderments, poetry, or drawings to me. Have you visited a great Web site recently? Are you particularly happy (or disappointed) with a native plant you've nurtured (or ignored)? Would you like to see more of /less of a topic? Do you know of hikes or other activities in your area?

The Observations section also welcomes your input. The Sequoia Chapter covers a wide range of climates and topography. And you don't have to be a gardener to appreciate California's incredible plant diversity. Indeed, gardeners should be sure to get out and learn from nature.



Send newsletter contributions, corrections, or suggestions to Thelma Valdez at <nmtv@att.net>.

The next newsletter will be the February issue. Contributions are due by Friday, February 4.

SEQUOIA CHAPTER OFFICERS* AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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*Vice-President	Paul Mitchell 580 W. Manning Ave Reedley, CA 93654	559/638-2784 (h) madpaul@cvip.net	*Treasurer	Jeanne Larson 3457 E. Redlands Fresno, CA 93726	559/243-0815 (h) jrjlars@aol.com
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Field trips / Programs Co-chairs	Joanna Clines 57003 Road 225 North Fork, CA 93643	559/877-2218 x3150 (w) jclines@fs.fed.us	Education	Peggy Jones 1931 Winter Street Kingsburg, CA 93631	559/897-9646 autumn_aspen@hotmail.com
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Hospitality	Madeleine Mitchell 580 W. Manning Reedley, CA 93654	559/638-2784 (h) madpaul@cvip.net	Conservation Co-chairs	Jeanne Larson Joseph Oldham 2483 S. Rabe Fresno, CA 93727	(see above) 559/237-2926 J.Oldham1@comcast.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: _____

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

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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

January 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 >**

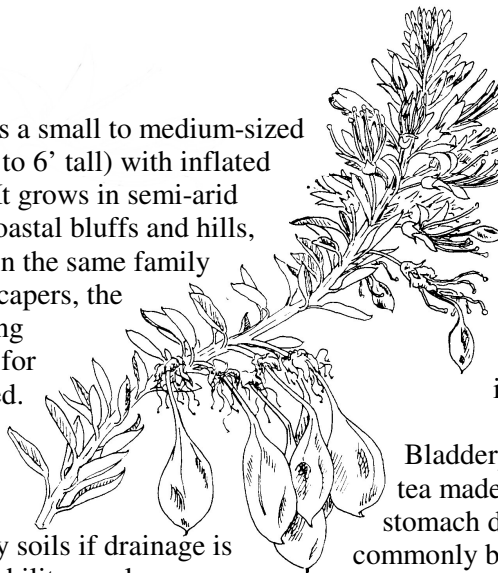
FEATURED PLANT

Bladderpod

Isomeris arborea or Bladderpod is a small to medium-sized erect, thickly-branched shrub (3' to 6' tall) with inflated fruits, hence its common name. It grows in semi-arid and arid conditions, such as on coastal bluffs and hills, and in desert washes. While it's in the same family as the plant that produces edible capers, the leaves of Bladderpod have a strong unpleasant odor, which accounts for another common name, Stinkweed.

It is quite common and ranges widely from the coast to the deserts to an elevation of about 4000'. It will accept clay to rocky soils if drainage is good and is often used for soil stability on slopes.

The showy yellow flowers are up to 12" long. The fruit is a large, inflated elliptic capsule to 2" long with a pointed tip that contains smooth seeds and hangs down. The bladder surrounds the seeds and becomes papery when mature. The detached pods are easily blown by the wind for seed dispersal.



Bladderpod blooms throughout much of the year and a measure of its hardiness is that in February, 2003, in Joshua Tree National Park after five years of below normal rainfall in the desert, Bladderpod was observed blooming everywhere. No supplemental water is needed once it is established and it actually resents overwatering and can suffer in very wet winters.

Bladderpod was used by Native Americans (often in a tea made from the fruit pods) to cure sore throats, stomach disorders, and fevers. The seed pod itself was commonly baked and eaten and the green extract from the pods was used as a dye for woven baskets. The Tongva name for Bladderpod is Takape Ahots. The Tongva are the native people of the Los Angeles basin.

It is not highly recommended for the average garden but can be used in larger native gardens especially on dry slopes and road bank



Drawings © 1991 by
Bonnie K. Walters

