



CARPENTERIA

Newsletter of the Sequoia Chapter
California Native Plant Society

May 2005

CHAPTER MEETING

Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, May 17. 7:00 p.m.
“California’s Oaks” with Pam Muick, Executive Director, California Native Plant Society

It is a real treat to have Pam Muick speak to our chapter. She is the Executive Director of California Native Plant Society and is a widely recognized expert on California’s oaks.

Prior to her position with CNPS, Pam served as the Executive Director of Solano Land Trust for six years. There she was responsible for raising more than \$7 million dollars and protecting over 4,000 acres of farmland and 4,000 acres of open space, including King Ranch, Jepson Prairie and Lynch Canyon. Pam developed the first comprehensive countywide plan for farmland protection in Solano County. Also, she was part of a coalition that developed an open space vision for Solano County.

Board meeting starts promptly at 6:00 pm. All members are welcome to attend the Board Meeting.

Meeting and speaker at 7:00 pm. Unitarian Universalist Church, 4144 N. Millbrook (S of Ashlan Avenue). The public is welcome!



Valley Oaks (*Quercus lobata*) in winter at China Creek

Future Meeting Programs

June-July-August	No meetings. Enjoy the summer!
September	TBA.

HIKES

Hike to Vernal Pools on Table Mountain at the McKenzie Preserve
Saturday, June 4, 2005

See plants that bloom long after spring hikes are completed. 6 mile roundtrip hike to the vernal pools on the table top. It should be excellent considering the May rainfall. Bring food, hat, sunscreen, and lots of water. Hike starts at 8:00 a.m. to beat the possible heat. Directions to the McKenzie Preserve can be found at < http://www.sierrafoothill.org/table_mt__preserve.htm >

Field Trip to Nelder Grove of Giant Sequoias

Sunday, June 5, 2005,

to see Mountain Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium montanum*) and the rare veined water lichen (*Hydrothyria venosa*), along with many other beautiful wildflowers of the Giant Sequoia grove!

Group will meet at the junction of Highway 41 and the Bass Lake Road (Rd 222) at 10 am on Sunday, June 5. Please RSVP to Wendy Fisher, field trip leader, at 559/641-7241

SPEAKING OF OAKS...

The Wildlife Conservation Society and California Partners in Flight produced a handout titled “Enhancing Oak Woodland Habitat for Birds at Your Home or Ranch”.

It contains excellent guidance for maintaining healthy oak woodland for native plants and animals. Find it at www.prbo.org/calpif/pdfs/oak_handout.pdf

Some excellent oak Web sites are:

- The California Oak Foundation
< www.californiaoaks.org >
- Wildlife Conservation Society
< www.wcs.org/pacificwest >
- California Partners in Flight
< www.prbo.org/calpif >
- California Oak Mortality Task Force
< www.suddenoakdeath.org >

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Earth Day '05 was a great day for me and for the chapter. I love a party, and we had a good one at China Creek, celebrating the opening of the interpretive trail.

There were representatives from our own chapter, Audubon Society, El Rio Reyes Trust, Kings River Conservancy, Sanger Environmental Fund, Vulcan Materials, Reedley College, Sanger High School, Centerville Elementary School, the community at large, as well as neighboring landowners.

We owe thanks to many people and organizations for helping us reach this point, but space limitations require me to keep such expressions to the short list.

- Jeanne Larson recognized early on the park's potential as a place to realize the CNPS mission, and with characteristic single-mindedness pursued her vision with correspondence and legwork through the years.
- Our scientific and cultural consultants Howard Latimer, Joanna Clines, Mary McClanahan, Nur Ritter, and Lorrie Planas toiled through the fieldwork required to produce accurate botanical, historical, and cultural information for the brochure.
- Newsletter editor, Thelma Valdez did her usual magic tricks to get all the information crammed into a beautifully illustrated and readable single page brochure.
- Education chair Peggy Jones wrote grants; persuaded Sanger High staff (Mr. Robert Juarez) and students to help with numbers, signs and refreshments; organized the ceremony; and decorated the kiosk.
- Kent Kinney and Amy Mazzoni of Reedley College brought their students to help with construction.
- Vulcan materials provided both materials and labor.
- Neighbor Hank Urbach and his tractor were invaluable. Hank also helped with historical information, local contacts and general encouragement.

Yes, this is the short list.

After the ceremony I claimed the right to lead the first tour of the trail. The tour group was widely mixed and included about 10 staff and students from Centerville Elementary. The kids' wide-eyed enthusiasm provided the perfect conclusion to the months of preparation.

-Warren Shaw

APRIL CHAPTER MEETING

Flowers, flowers, and more flowers. That is what best characterizes the April chapter meeting where John Stebbins and his botanist compadres showed us beautiful photos from recent visits to numerous California deserts in the past couple of months. Some plants were nearly unrecognizable due to their unusually large size – another result of this year's unusually generous rainfall.

By the end of the evening, we had visited Anza Borrego, Death Valley, Joshua Tree, and Mojave. Members were encouraged to bring any desert photos of their own and we were also treated to photos from Peggy Jones' recent trip to the deserts

SEQUOIA CHAPTER IN FREMONTIA

As part of the 40-year celebration of CNPS, individual chapters are featured during this year's issues of Fremontia, the state CNPS journal. You should have recently received the latest issue of Fremontia. The Sequoia chapter's history is one of the local chapter histories.



A Humorous Look at Plants

Excerpted from an article by Wayland L. Ezell

Plants certainly are nothing to laugh at, but many botanists know how to teach about plants in a humorous vein. I think of the Ag teacher at Ventura College, where I first taught. On identifying a Lily of the Nile plant for his students, he would say, with a most serious voice, "This is Agapanthus, not Agatha's pants." Then, he laughed that silent laugh only punsters know and understand.

Professor Stocking was an excellent teacher, with a flair for the pun. He'd lead his botany students across campus naming the trees, and beneath a Colorado blue spruce, he'd tell us it was *Picea pungens*, then add that a women's dorm used to be near, and before young men picked up their dates, they'd gaze into the tree and comb their hair, thus the phrase, "sprucing up."

His forte was leading field trips to identify plants and observe ecological transitions from the Central Valley to the Sierra's alpine tundra. On these excursions along Highway 4, passing by an almond orchard, he'd ask, "Do you say 'al-mond' or 'ah-mond?'" Well, when they are on the tree they are 'almonds,' but when harvested they are 'ahmonds,' because you have to knock the L out of them to get them off the tree!"

On teaching parts of a flower, he'd remind us that one can remember the stamen is male because it ends in "men," and the pistil is female from the popular song, "Pistol Packin' Mama!" We groaned, and I'm sure I groaned the loudest, but I repeated it often during my teaching career.

Dr. Stocking was one of the best professors I ever had. He demonstrated that it is fun to learn and learning can be fun. Yes, I carried away his puns, but more importantly, I carried away the detailed botanical knowledge he taught, with this observation: enjoy yourself because teaching is fun. So have fun. When is a weed not a weed? When it's a knotweed! (Or for the purists: when it's *Polygonum cuspidatum*.)

I now understand that silent laugh. You tell a pun for yourself; if anyone else laughs, it's a bonus! But hopefully, it will teach a fact and instill an interest in plants, and maybe even motivate someone to become a botanist. Thanks, Dr. S.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Chawanakee Unified School District

Spring 2005 Classes - Chawanakee Adult School

Classes are \$10. For information, call Luba at 645-1137 x2. Pack water and a snack; dress in layers; wear hiking shoes.

Saturday	Big Sandy Granite Caves – San Joaquin River Gorge. A fairly level 4-mile round trip trail leads us along the river to rare granite caves, sculpted by the waters of Big Sandy Creek. Dress for warm weather. Meet at North Fork School.
May 14	
1-5 p.m.	

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	Wildflowers of Grand Bluffs. Enjoy the cool mountain air at 6000 ft. while taking a moderate hike with Bonnie Bladen and John Stebbens (May 21) or Bonnie and Chuck Peck (June 18). 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
May 21 or	
June 18	

Special Events

Saturday	Wildflower Walk & Lunch at Grand Bluffs. A moderately paced hike with Botanist Joanna Clines to view and identify the wildflowers at 6000 ft. at Grand Bluffs Demonstration Forest. Enjoy a prepared lunch. \$35. 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
June 11	

California Native Grasslands Association

For information call 530.759.8458 or email <admin@cnga.org>

Identifying and Appreciating the Native and Naturalized Grasses of California

May 18 & 19, 2005, 8 am–4:30 pm

Point Reyes Station and Point Reyes National Seashore

Learning to identify grasses leads to a deeper understanding of our California environment. The primary goal is to learn the basic skills of identifying grasses. A valuable class syllabus binder and a basic key will be provided. Enrollment is limited. Reservations are accepted on a first-paid, first-confirmed basis.

Sierra Spring Sojourn (May 13-15, 2005)

The Bristlecone Chapter of CNPS holds their 8th Biennial Sierra Spring Sojourn at the Bernasconi Center in Big Pine. It includes field trips and evening programs focusing on the flora of the White Mountains, Owens Valley and the eastern Sierra Nevada. Registration packs are available by email. Contact Sherryl Taylor at staylor@npgcable.com. To receive the pack by mail, send an SASE to Sherryl Taylor at P.O. Box 1638, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 or call 760-924-8742.

Pinnacles National Monument Weed Pull Fests

Preserve native plant communities in a gorgeous Pinnacles National Monument location, refreshments provided. Every 2nd and 3rd Saturday through June; special arrangements for groups of 6 or more. Contact Jenn at 831-389-4485 x274, or <jennifer_tiehm@nps.gov> for more info. Se habla español.

The 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>>.

Salix

Sequoia / Kings Canyon National Parks

July 15 – 17, 2005 with George Argus

This workshop is designed to help participants learn to identify these important species with confidence. This will be accomplished through field observation, laboratory study, and practical identification. Several short field trips will be taken into alpine and riparian habitats.

Course fee includes camping fees and meals for the duration of the workshop. Camping is at the Wolverton Boy Scout Camp.

Sierra Nevada Plants: An Introduction to Species and Communities

Sierra Nevada Aquatic Research Lab, Mono County

July 28 – 31, 2005 with Linda Ann Vorobik

This is an introductory level workshop on keying Sierran wildflowers and identifying communities and their indicator species. We will visit the great variety of major plant communities found in the eastern Sierra, including desert scrub, sagebrush, forest, riparian, and the alpine fellfields.

While in the field and during evening lab sessions, plants will be identified using The Jepson Manual. Each day will include field trips to a variety of localities where basic field etiquette will be emphasized (no collecting), with an evening lecture and keying back in the lab. Participants should be physically fit and prepared for heat or inclement weather, and some vigorous hiking.

Sierra Nevada Field Campus – Summer 2005

The Sierra Nevada Field Campus of San Francisco State University is located along side the North Yuba River just east of Sierra City near the base of the spectacular Sierra Buttes. The campus is bounded by the trout-filled North Yuba River and by mountains. Facilities include a two-story dining hall/lodge with a fully equipped kitchen and staff. There are tent platforms with tents and beds and outdoor flush toilet facilities with hot water and showers. There is also ample area within the campus for personal campsites.

Visit <www.sfsu.edu/~sierra> for information on classes, tuition. This summer they are having classes in Biology, Astronomy, and Geology.

Plant classes of note are:

- Fungi of the Sierra Nevada
- Flora of the Sierra Nevada
- Medicinal and Edible Wild Plants
- Forest Ecology and Conservation



Volunteer's Corner

- **CNPS Sequoia Chapter Native Plant Sale**, typically in September. We need a volunteer to coordinate our chapter's Native Plant Sale. Interested? Contact Warren Shaw 559/855-4519 or email at <warshaw@netptc.net>

WATER

Although you haven't had reason to water your lawn yet, summer is on its way. Nearly every homeowner knows that lawns in the Central Valley are completely unnatural and to be green and healthy all summer must be supported by a system of precious water, sprinkler pipe, maintenance, toil (mowing), often chemicals that we know can't be good for the soil, and what to do with all those grass clippings?

Moving away from lawn to a home landscape that is rich in texture, color, smells, and far less water is a bit of a psychological evolution. It often doesn't happen overnight. But if you start small and get comfortable a little at a time, the rewards will become apparent. To help you get started, here are excerpts from articles by the Union of Concerned Scientists:

The Water-Wise Lawn

This isn't break-through information for us folks that enjoy native plants, but sometimes we need a reminder in these busy, hectic times. For many homeowners, the space around their house is as important as the space inside. Indeed, millions of dollars are spent each year keeping lawns neat, healthy, and green. But lawn care doesn't just require money; it requires water--a lot of it. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, about one-third of outdoor water use in the U.S. goes toward lawn care. And when a specific area of the country is experiencing drought conditions, lawn care places additional stress on available water supplies.

Conserving water doesn't mean having to abandon your lawn. With some smart landscaping techniques, you can save the water, time, and money spent on your yard while increasing its natural beauty.

Smaller is Better

Chances are you maintain more of your lawn than you actually use very day. If your lawn is an unbroken sea of grass, consider planting trees, shrubs, and perennial flowers and low-growing ground covers. These attractive, less water-intensive alternatives to grass provide the additional benefit of bringing birds, butterflies, and other wildlife to your yard.

The best place to start is areas of your lawn where grass is hard to grow or maintain in the first place, such as wet, shady, or steeply sloped areas, or spots where the soil is sandy or rocky. Many native plants are non-invasive and are naturally adapted to our region.

Backyard Biodiversity

The space around our homes provides us with places to play and relax. To local wildlife, however, expanses of lush, green grass might as well be asphalt. Lawns provide animals with no shade, shelter, or food, and the runoff from fertilizers and pesticides applied to lawns can contaminate wildlife habitats. The EPA estimates that approximately 20 million acres of land in the US are dedicated to lawns—more than is used for any single crop.

Instead of cultivating a sea of grass, consider incorporating some of the following elements around your home to create a landscape that is not only beautiful but also promotes a variety of animal and insect life.

Plants

- Convert a section of your lawn to prairie or wildflower meadow. This not only reduces the amount of grass you have to maintain, but also creates more natural space in which local animals and insects may reside.
- Choose native varieties. Native plants are naturally adapted to the local climate, and generally provide the best food and

shelter for wildlife with the least amount of maintenance. By contrast, non-native (or invasive) plants can crowd out native varieties and deny local wildlife the habitat they need to survive.

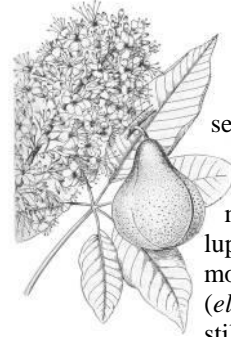
- Imitate natural habitats. Plant in clusters and build overlapping layers of tall trees, small trees, shrubs, and smaller plants.
- Provide food sources. Plant shrubs and trees that produce fruits and berries for wildlife such as birds and butterflies.
- Create curves. Because there is a greater amount of biodiversity in the area of transition between habitat types, create a larger transition zone by shaping planting beds with curved or irregular borders.

Fencing

Fences can be barriers to wildlife, restricting access to food and shelter. If you have a tall fence, create some small gaps along the bottom through which animals can pass. Or consider alternatives such as a low rock wall or, better yet, a living fence of trees and shrubs. Both options not only provide wildlife with access, but shade and shelter as well.

OBSERVATIONS

Despite continuing rains the hills are beginning to brown. Farewell to spring (*Clarkia*) is beginning to appear in masses on some south-facing slopes, along with Mariposa lilies. Buckeyes are in full bloom in lower elevations and just starting here (2000').



On a recent walk we saw at least four species of *Clarkia*—two we hadn't seen before—and a pretty little *Mimulus (viscidus)* new to us. Many midseason blooms: annual lupine, common yellow monkey flower, tarweed (*elegans*) are fading now but still showy in places.

Out in Reedley, just about everything in the Mitchell's native garden is huge with all the extra rain! The *Rosa californica* is blooming, along with the *Heucheras*. Cleveland sage is half in bloom, poppies really leggy, but still blooming.

I suppose we'll be talking about this season's rainfall for years to come. Our garden is seeing a tremendous settling in of many natives planted in the fall and winter, such as California wild grape, nude buckwheat, and a few Valley Oaks. Those natives – adapted to handle a year like this one as well as years coming when water is scarce. We should all be so adaptable.

-- Editor

The worst sin towards our fellow-creatures is not to hate them but to be indifferent to them; that's the essence of inhumanity.
- George Bernard Shaw

CNPS California Native Grass Posters

If you didn't have a chance to purchase the posters at April's meeting, come to the March meeting where they will be for sale again.

The artwork is beautiful and the posters are suitable for hanging. Or you can laminate them and use them as place mats or educational tools.

On the back of each is information on grasses: the anatomy of a grass, grasses in general, California's native grasslands, and the effects of invasive non-native grasses.

You can purchase these at the April and May chapter meetings. They are \$13.00 (includes tax) for CNPS members and \$16.00 (includes tax) for non-members. This is a better deal than you can get by purchasing them directly from the state CNPS.

Newsletter



Send your perspectives, thoughts, poetry, or drawings to me. Have you visited a great Web site recently? How are those native plants you planted last fall doing with our wonderful winter rains? 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 May issue. Contributions are due by Friday, May 6.

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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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- Patron\$250
- Benefactor\$500
- Bristlecone\$1000

California Native Plant Society
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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

May 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

Farewell-to-Spring



The genus *Clarkia* was named for Captain William Clark (1770-1838) of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. CalFlora.org lists 73 different species of the *Clarkia* genus native to California with 25

documented findings in Fresno County. Here is a lively discussion of *Clarkia* from “The Shooting Star”, the newsletter of the CNPS Sierra Foothills chapter:

“The Jepson Manual gives the common name, Farewell to Spring, to *Clarkia amoena*. However, some folks use the common name for other species of *Clarkia*.

Perhaps the most interesting common name for *C. amoena* is found in the Peterson Field Guide to Pacific States Wildflowers. Richard Spellenberg calls it Herald to Summer. I guess saying hello to summer is another way of saying goodbye to spring.

So which *Clarkia* species should be called Farewell to Spring? To paraphrase Rhett Butler, frankly most taxonomist don't give a darn!

If you call all of the native *Clarkia* species Farell to Spring, very few folks will look upon you as a taxonomic heretic. Some, however, will insist *C. biloba* is Four Hearts, *C. concinna* is Red Ribbons, and *C. unguiculata* is Elegant *Clarkia*.

Frederick Pursh in 1814 created the genera *Clarkia* and *Lewisia* to honor William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, based on plants Lewis collected on their expedition. Here in California there is a species named *Clarkia lewisii*, but its specific epithet *lewisii* is in reference to Harlan Lewis, who monographed the genus in 1955.”

Call them what you like but visit them you must. Our local foothills are alive with *Clarkia* this year. If you haven't seen them yet, take a drive soon before they subside as the temperatures begin to exceed 80 degrees.

(Photo courtesy of Clarkia cylindrica ssp. Cylindrica © 2002 Christopher L. Christie)