



China Creek Update –October, 2012

Warren Shaw



Finally! In October we treated our ever-increasing grove of Ailanthus (“Tree of Heaven”) with a carefully chosen herbicide. We used the “hack and squirt” method, cutting a row of small flaps of bark with a hatchet and filling each with the chemical, using a spray bottle. We worked in teams of two: one hacker and one squirter. For the small sprouts (of which there are about 800), we simply lopped and sprayed the whole trunk. We’ll have to wait for spring to see how effective this treatment has been, and plan to re-treat as necessary. Mary McClanahan, who has been the guiding light in this project, is thankful to see some long-awaited progress.

In addition we treated some of the many “wild” figs, which are scattered throughout the Park; we have many, many more of these to do, but are glad to have gotten a start.



We also took delivery on materials, donated by our neighbor, Vulcan Materials, for placing protective cages around the many Valley Oak seedlings that have popped up in recent years. Many thanks to Vulcan.

AND, we seem to be on the verge of accomplishing something we’ve talked about for years, which is to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with Fresno County, formalizing our status as caretakers of the Park. County staff, especially John Thompson and Carla Hawks, have been very helpful in this process, and we’re most grateful.

The November “work party” will conclude with a “Thank you” luncheon, hosted by the Chapter to express our thanks to the people who have supported the Chapter’s mission at China Creek throughout the year.

So, you see, we have many things to be thankful for.

op—a hacker and a squirter
bove—recently hacked ailanthus

‘tis the season.....



❖ HOLIDAY CHEER AT THE SJRP&CT RIVER CENTER

Saturday, November 17, 2012, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust will host their annual Holiday Cheer event on November 17, 2012. Holiday Cheer features live music and dance performances, storytelling, free cookies and hot beverages, children's crafts and games, nature and earth-friendly information booths including Sequoia Chapter. Lunch will be available for purchase from the River Rocks Cafe. Want to help? Contact Marian Orvis at 559-226-0145.

❖ HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE at Intermountain Nursery, Prather Sunday, December 9, 10AM – 4PM

This annual event includes local artists with handmade gifts, live music, and refreshments.

30443 N. Auberry Rd. @ Hwy 168, Prather, CA 93651

Intermountainnursery.com

Observations

--from Jeanne Larson

•Remember, November is the month to divide Pacific Coast Iris. If roots have not yet fully formed, soak plants in shallow water for about two weeks, or until roots elongate, or form, and then replant. Wildflower seeds can be planted as late as January, but clean out the weeds first.

•If you haven't been along Millerton Road lately it provides a good example, once you pass Table Mountain Casino, of the difference between good and bad grazing management practices in a drought year. Although Annual Grasslands have a good seed store, the weather is the most important factor on how well and how soon the herbage recovers from grazing to bare ground. The whole ecosystem, invertebrates, birds, reptiles, mammals depend upon plants for food. It isn't just loss of grazing for cattle.

•If you have not browsed the new, colorful

FREMONTIA, (May-September, 2011), take time to start on page 41, "Restoring California's Inland Grasslands: Don't Forget the Forbs! It is an interesting commentary on our foothill ecosystems.

Gilia tricolor

--from Warren Shaw

Not much to report from the foothills, except that recent small rains have brought immediate response from both broadleaf (mainly filaree) and annual grasses in a few areas. Dropping of Buckeye "nuts" and acorns is widespread.



However, a recent trip to Shaver was more interesting: dogwoods are turning, and colors range from light pink to flaming orange. Black Oaks are starting to show gold, as are willows, aspens, ferns and many other plants. Along the four-lane (Hwy 168) redbud leaves are many shades of red, but California Fuchsia is still blooming brightly at the 2000-foot level.

And, on another trip, to the coast, we saw more Black Oaks and Sycamores turning, lots of red berries on Toyon, even brighter red berries on Madrone, and again, Fuchsia blossoms.



California's Prairies and Grasslands

That is the theme of the current issue of *Fremontia*, journal of the California Native Plant Society. (issue date May and Sept. 2011; publication date Oct. 2012)

This issue begins with a quote from John Muir's journal, written when he descended from Pacheco Pass into the Central Valley in 1868: "Here it is not as in our great western prairie, flowers sprinkled in the grass, but grass in the flowers." Muir was impressed not only with the abundance of wildflowers but also with the scarcity of grasses.

This issue could have been a poignant one, describing what we have lost and, of course, we have lost much. However, this reader senses a hopeful note in articles that document restoration efforts in place and planned; a broadening appreciation for native plants and their protection; and the ongoing search for common ground and collaboration. ~Helen Shaw

Master Gardener Classes

Bare Root Basics

Becky Thompson

Learn the basics of selecting, planting and caring for bare root plants, including roses, fruit trees, berries, asparagus and others.

Wednesday, Dec. 5, 9:30am - 11:00am \$15

18th Annual Wreath and Swags Class

Robbie Cranch

Learn a variety of techniques for holiday wreath and swag construction, using fresh, locally gathered materials (some quite unusual). Dress in warm casual clothes, and bring a wire nipper and hand clipper if possible. Class is limited to 20 and pre-registration is required. (no walk-ins)

Saturday, Dec. 8, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm \$30

Registration information and forms available online at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/mgfresno>

--**And** congratulations to our new master gardener, Michele LuValle, who joins Madeleine Mitchell, Beth Teviotdale, and Judith Parker-- fellow master gardeners and members of CNPS and our Sequoia Chapter. Others? Let us know.

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

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Where's Jane?

Jane Pritchard is still hiking and writing, although we did give her a short break from writing. She will return in January with her keen eye and sense of humor intact.

In November Jane and frequent hiking companion, Eileen Bennett, started at Tollhouse Rock, off Tollhouse Rd. They walked about 2 miles from there and came back with some amazing photos of seeds and other reproductive parts of plants. Some of these are on the photo page that goes out to email recipients of the newsletter. If you get your newsletter in the mail and would like to see the photo page, email me and I'll be glad to send it to you. Better yet, let me know and I'll send you every newsletter by email—in living color. helshaw@netptc.net

👉 **Next Newsletter – January 2013** 👈

Send newsletter corrections or suggestions to Helen Shaw at Helshaw@netptc.net. The deadline for the January newsletter is Friday, January 4



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: _____

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- 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

Nov. Dec. 2012



CALIFORNIA NATIVE
PLANT SOCIETY
SEQUOIA CHAPTER

c/o Jeanne Larson ♦ 3457 Redlands ♦ Fresno, CA 93726

MADELEINE'S MUSINGS

Madeleine Mitchell



I receive a weekly email from GardenSoft that features drought tolerant and native plants from all over California. This week however, the owner of the site, Gerry Kiffe, featured the Giant Sequoia as he had just returned from a trip to Sequoia National Park and wrote and photographed some of the larger trees. So knowing that there were 2 young trees in the Reedley College arboretum, I photographed them. One was planted in February 25, 2011, dedicated to Sheriff Officer, Joel Wahlenmaier, who was killed in Minkler. The other was planted by the Forestry Dept. at the college, along with a native plant garden, in the fall of that year. The larger tree, now 8 1/2 foot tall was in a 15-gallon container. The smaller one is 7 1/2 foot was from a 5 gallon. What I found interesting was the bark of the smaller tree that was marbled with colors. They look so different from the mature species and are doing well in our hot valley floor. If anyone is interested in the weekly short slide shows, the website is gardenworkswest.com. There is an archive of many gardens, including some from our area.



Sequoiadendron giganteum
from left

General Grant in Sequoia National Park
Reedley College arboretum
Joel Wahlenmaier memorial, Reedley



**CNPS
Sequoia Chapter
Nov. Dec. 2012**
From top, left

- Screech owl, hiding
- Milkweed seed
- Twining brodiaea
- Acorn from *Quercus garryana v. Breweri*
- Bush poppy (split seed)
- Wasp on oak gall

All photos courtesy of Eileen Bennett

