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CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
BULLETIN

The CNPS Rare Campaign:

Celebrating California's rare plants and rare places

By Sandy McCoy and Bob Hass

Launched this past summer, the CNPS Rare Campaign is a celebration of our rare plants and places. It is also a call for help in conserving California's rare plants. Over the next several months we are sharing rare plant stories and introducing as many people as possible to the pivotal role CNPS has played and continues to play in protecting and saving these spectacular treasures.

CNPS is asking everyone who loves California's legacy of diversity to support this effort in two important ways. First, we hope you will pledge a special gift to the Campaign this year. Second, and more importantly, we hope you will join us in some aspect of rare plant work—serving in whatever capacity you are comfortable, given your skills and available time. What follows here is a bit of background on California's rare flora, the many components of the CNPS Rare Plant Program, and a few new initiatives we'd like to add through the Campaign.



Rebecca Crowe

Jennifer Buck of the CNPS Vegetation Program assesses a provisional rare vegetation type dominated by Kern tarplant *(Deinandra pallida)* on the Wind Wolves Preserve in Kern County. Identifying and mapping rare vegetation types is essential to protect our environment for future generations.

RARE PLANTS IN CALIFORNIA

One of the paradoxes of the California flora is that rare is common in California. California is a global biodiversity hotspot. Almost one-third of our plant species (about 1,650) are rare, and an additional 580 species are of limited distribution and on a watch list. California has so many rare plants, and this is partly due to its unique combination of geology, topography, and soil diversity, along with a Mediterranean climate. California plants live in habitats as different as temperate rainforests and deserts, to alpine scrub and coastal marshes. Plant species have evolved to take advantage of what are frequently very local and particular conditions.

We care about rare plants for a variety of reasons, but we are most concerned about those rare plants that are in danger of extinction. Human impacts, such as habitat loss due to development, have destroyed natural areas where rare species occur. Invasive species have taken over areas where rare species used to live, and now climate change is also threatening rare plants, making their protection more urgent than ever before.

THE CNPS RARE PLANT PROGRAM

Since its foundation, CNPS has been the foremost source of scientific information on California's rare and endangered plants. The first *CNPS Inventory* was started by G. L. Stebbins on file cards. Now an online database, it is freely shared with the agencies, botanists, and environmental advocates who protect California's rare plants and habitats. It has evolved into a continuous *Inventory* review process, a science-based, data-driven, peer-reviewed assessment of the entire California flora. Six categories are used to define degrees of conservation concern, called the California Rare Plant Ranks. CNPS plays a leadership role in developing the rankings of rare

(continued on page 6)



From the Executive Director

New campaign, new staff, new chapter

No doubt you have heard it before, but it bears repeating: "Destroying species is like tearing pages out of an unread book, written in a language humans hardly know how to read, about the place where they live" (Rolston Homes, 1985).

That is why we are announcing the Rare Campaign, a yearlong initiative to celebrate and support CNPS work protecting rare plants and rare places. You should have received an appeal letter, and I hope you are able to join the fun and help us to shine a spotlight on a fundamental part of what CNPS does.

In other news: CNPS is growing stronger and bigger. Of course, every day we are adding new members. We also are hiring new staff, including a Horticulture Program Director, to support members and chapters so that they can accomplish even more.

However, right now CNPS is celebrating the addition of a 34th chapter—our first international chapter! It only takes 25 members to initiate a new chapter, so when we received a "new chapter petition" with 49 names it was doubly compelling. While CNPS-elected leaders were duly diligent in their deliberations, there was clear excitement at the opportunity to team with Mexican citizens to help explore and protect some of the most wild and intact parts of the California floristic province.



Paula Pijoan

A well-attended hike at Canyon Doña Petra in Ensenada, Mexico this past April, organized and led by Paula Pijoan, Claudia Leyva, and Sula Vanderplank. Its purpose was to generate support and interest for the new Baja California Chapter of CNPS. Participants came from as far away as Tijuana and Tecate.

This vision is poetically expressed in their petition for Chapter recognition:

> Historically Alta and Baja California have been tied with the existence of the native peoples of this great region and more recently with the arrival of the first Spaniards and Europeans to these lands. Alta California (now part of the United States) and Baja California in México are very different societies and contexts pertaining to the countries they belong to. Yet whatever differences we may have, we share the bounty of the California Floristic Province, with its world famous Mediterranean flora and habitats. And even though our ecosystems have proven to be very resilient to the perils of modern culture, we also share similar problems and threats to our unique natural surroundings.
>
> Our geographical area of operation would be the Mexican portion of the California Floristic Province in the Mediterranean cities of Tijuana, Tecate, Rosarito, and Ensenada. It is our intent to adhere our group to the vision and mission of the California Native Plant Society for the preservation and protection of our native flora and habitats, for the benefit of Baja California and for the enjoyment and wonder of all.

I hope you will join all of us in welcoming and supporting the newest chapter of a venerable organization: the Baja California Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

Dan Gluesenkamp
Executive Director

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Educational Grants Program Gets Substantial Boost for 2013

By Josie Crawford

For the past 30 years, member donations have made it possible for the Educational Grants Committee to distribute funds to students and researchers. This dedicated, all volunteer committee, chaired by Joan Stewart since 2005, is comprised of Lauren Brown, Dave Flietner, David Keil, Frank and Betsey Landis, and Loraine Washburn. Over the years, CNPS education grants have given an important boost to the careers of hundreds of budding researchers—including that of our current Executive Director, Dan Gluesenkamp!

As a science-based organization, CNPS is committed to supporting and training the upcoming generations of plant scientists and conservationists. We do this in several ways, including: providing educational grants to students throughout California; mentoring students and new practitioners; providing opportunities to attend and present research at CNPS conferences and chapter meetings; supporting the new Student Conservation Plan projects; and offering skill-building workshops. All of the above depend on donations and grants from our members and supporters.

This year the Educational Grants Committee has the pleasure of awarding twice as many student grants as is typical, thanks to the thoughtfulness of an anonymous Thanksgiving donor. In addition to supporting educational grants, this gift helps graduate students at Rancho Santa Ana to develop and publish conservation plans for the rarest of our rare plants. Even more, this year we have been able to give a free CNPS membership to all students receiving grants. In exchange, we are asking that recipients share the results of their research with the world by either 1) writing an article for *Fremontia*, 2) presenting a talk at a chapter meeting, 3) presenting at a CNPS conference or symposia, or 4) writing a report documenting what they have discovered.

Four types of endowed grants are available through the Educational Grants Committee:

Helen Sharsmith grants, established in 1983, pay memorial tribute to the author of *The Flora of the Mount Hamilton Range*. We award Helen Sharsmith grants to students or non-students involved in research on California's native flora.

We created the **Doc Burr Graduate Research Fund** in 1983 to honor Horace K. "Doc" Burr, a founder and Fellow of the Society. Doc Burr grants are awarded to graduate students conducting research that promotes conservation of California's flora and vegetation.

The **Hardman Native Plant Research Award** supports promising academic and applied botanical research involving California's native plants, especially rare plants. For this grant, we also welcome research leading to the elimination of invasive plants from the state's flora.

The **G. Ledyard Stebbins Award** was established in 1986 to honor Dr. Stebbins for his many years of dedication to CNPS, and is given to graduate students of genetics and evolutionary botany. Each year one Stebbins Award may be awarded for an outstanding proposal on research in evolutionary botany.

Proposals, due each September 30, are currently being reviewed by the Educational Grants Committee and the awards will be announced at the December 2013 Chapter Council Meeting. If you would like to learn more about the Educational Grants Program or contribute to any other education project, please contact Dan Gluesenkamp at dgluesenkamp@cnps.org.



Amanda Brady

Lee Ripma, one of the 2012 CNPS educational grant recipients, on a summer collecting trip. The grant enabled her to gather herbarium specimens of the cat's eye genus *(Oreocarya)*, a member of the Borage family, and examine evolutionary relationships in the group.

Josie Crawford is the CNPS Education Program Director and Conservation Conference Coordinator. She has been engaged in native plant-related education for over 20 years.

CHAPTER NEWS

BRISTLECONE CHAPTER:

Eastern Sierra Spring Sojourn

The Bristlecone Chapter hosted the eighth annual Eastern Sierra Spring Sojourn this past June 1–2, 2013. The Sojourn offered CNPS members an amazing, flower-filled weekend of diverse field trips, wildflower presentations, and natural history education in our breathtaking eastern Sierra Nevada region.



Kristen Luetkemeier

McMurray Meadow at 7,000 feet typifies the spectacular setting of the Sierra Spring Sojourn.

Filled to capacity, plant enthusiasts from chapters throughout the state (and even Reno, NV) came to experience this unique weekend opportunity. The Sojourn facility site, the Bernasconi Education Center, is located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains west of Big Pine at an elevation of about 5,000 feet. Participants arrived on Friday evening for registration, and then the Sojourn commenced with a native plant display and presentation.

Field trip leaders exceeded all expectations and found numerous flowering plants in diverse vegetation communities—even in this drought year—at elevations from 4,000 feet on the Owens Valley floor up to 10,000 feet at Schulman Grove in the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest.

After the Saturday evening banquet, Steve Matson gave a presentation, "Botanizing Big Pine," and described the botanical adventures he has had in and around that area over the last five years. His stunning photos portrayed the remarkable flora and magnificent landscape of the eastern Sierra Nevada. Steve is widely recognized for his photo documentation of the flora of Eastern California and western Nevada.

CNPS members are encouraged to check our calendar at http://bristleconecnps.org/index.php for upcoming Sojourns. There's always more to see, as well-known local botanist and conservationist Mary DeDecker would have said, "just around the corner."

Julie Anne Hopkins
Publicity Chair

YERBA BUENA CHAPTER:

Plant ID Workshops: Collaboration with SFSU

The Yerba Buena Chapter has been fortunate in having an excellent working collaboration with the biology department at San Francisco State University (SFSU). We needed a location and qualified people to teach our plant ID workshops, so I contacted the chair of the university's biology department, Dr. Michael Goldman, and explained the chapter's needs. He agreed to help us by providing the botany lab free-of-charge. Dr. Robert Patterson, professor and graduate coordinator, has been the point person, helping to organize the workshops and enlist botany graduate students to lead them. The students have been willing and eager to do so, and four are CNPS members!

The first plant ID workshop took place in February 2013, and we continue to meet on the second Thursday of the month in Hensill Hall at SFSU for 1½ hours. So far we have held workshops on plant terminology, keying using oxalis and beach strawberry, grass terminology, and keying grasses. The average attendance has been 10 people per session.

The collaboration between our chapter and SFSU actually began three years ago when we arranged for the December 2010 Chapter Council Meeting to be held at SFSU. Our chapter sponsored three SFSU botany students so they could attend the 2012 CNPS Conservation Conference in San Diego, and this year our garden tour coordinator has had eight SFSU student volunteers assisting with the chapter's native plant garden tour.



Richard Craib

Participants at the chapter's May 2013 Plant ID Workshop on keying grasses, held at San Francisco State University. Standing, left to right: Casey Allen (president), Jean Conner, Mila Stroganoff, Adrian Stroganoff (treasurer). Seated, left to right: Karla dos Santos Allen, Rebecca Crowe (graduate student and workshop leader).

Our chapter-university collaboration has reaped benefits for both parties, and we strongly recommend it to other chapters.

Mila Stroganoff
Plant ID Workshop Coordinator

Save the Date!

Planning for 2015 CNPS Conservation Conference Underway

2015 marks the 50th anniversary of CNPS! We will kick off the year with a larger-than-ever scientific conference January 15–17 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in San Jose. There will be two days of pre-conference workshops on January 13 and 14, field trips, and also numerous sessions and activities that will appeal to native plant lovers with less scientific backgrounds, offered at a lower ticket price.

Over 1,000 people from a broad cross-section of policymakers, scientists, land stewards, and conservationists are expected to attend this five-day celebration. We hope to inspire a new generation of researchers, conservationists, and environmental advocates by inviting many students and young practitioners.

Participants will have numerous new sessions to choose from, three keynote speakers, a banquet, drawings and raffles, a large exhibitors hall, art, photography, poetry, and music. There will also be time for relaxation in a discotheque with stage and mirror balls and leopard-skin patterned tables. Events, sessions, and hotel rooms will be located in one building, with some workshops and field trips in remote locations.



Kristie Haydu

Professor emeritus David Keil of Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, pointing out staminate and pistillate flowers of chilicothe *(Marah macrocarpa)* on a field trip to Torrey Pines State Park during the 2012 CNPS Conference Conference.

The call for workshop proposals opens this coming January, and the call for abstracts should open in early spring 2014. Early registration will begin in July 2014. We are filling conference planning committees now and especially need help with outreach, volunteer coordination, student activities, audio visual, and all arts committees. More detailed information will be available on the CNPS website, at http://www.cnps.org/cnps/conservation/conference/2015/.

If you would like to volunteer for one of the preplanning committees, please contact Josie Crawford at jcrawford@cnps.org. Help us celebrate 50 years of plant conservation in January 2015, and come prepared for an amazing conference.

Josie Crawford
CNPS Education Program Director

In Appreciation

Excellence in Leadership Awards for Horticulture

On July 13, at an event in Palo Alto, Dan Gluesenkamp recognized two longtime CNPS volunteers, Jean Struthers and Arvind Kumar, for their contributions to native plant horticulture. The event was hosted by Peter and Melanie Cross at their home, where Melanie maintains an extraordinary native plant garden.

Both Jean and Arvind qualify as "chapter stalwarts." They have both held numerous chapter positions and undertaken many projects. While they were recognized for their contributions to horticulture, they have also made tremendous contributions to education, to conservation, and to the Santa Clara Valley Chapter and State CNPS.

Jean and Arvind have done great things for native plant horticulture. Jean Struthers founded and constructed the Santa Clara Valley Chapter Nursery at Hidden Villa around 1995. She has operated it since then with the help of volunteers recruited by her astonishing dedication and enthusiasm.

Arvind's leadership in publicity, and in organizing garden tours and native plant gardening symposia, has also been inspirational. The symposia, in particular, have become a model for other CNPS chapters, attracting star speakers and crowds of eager home gardeners. In fact, as many as 300 people attended the 2011 symposium. In addition, both Jean and Arvind have recruited hundreds of people into CNPS.

CNPS will soon hire a horticulture director. There is no doubt that he or she will be learning a great deal from both of these extraordinary people.



Jean Struthers and Arvind Kumar, CNPS honorees, with Dan Gluesenkamp, CNPS Executive Director.
Both photos by the author.

Sandy McCoy, CNPS
Development Consultant

Rare Campaign

(from page 1)

plants in California through the status review process—a joint project of CNPS, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, regional botanical experts, and many other experts throughout California and the world.

CNPS scientists regularly provide technical assistance and rare plant information to CNPS chapters, conservation staff, and volunteers for their advocacy work. While this can take considerable time, a plant's status in the *CNPS Inventory* can compel important responses under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This may be the single most important tool currently available for conservationists who seek to protect rare plants and rare plant communities.



Aaron E. Sims

Thanks to the help of numerous CNPS volunteers throughout the years, the frequency and distribution of the rare fragrant fritillary *(Fritillaria liliacea)* is relatively well-known.

As in the earliest days of the Program, the CNPS Rare Plant Program relies on volunteer participation and scientific consensus. The Program receives support from many other professional and amateur botanists and from volunteer Rare Plant Coordinators in each of the 34 CNPS chapters. Over 500 volunteer collaborators contribute rare plant data and review proposed changes to the *CNPS Inventory*. CNPS chapters across the state have developed innovative initiatives to monitor and protect their rare plants. For example, volunteers in the East Bay Chapter use Dianne Lake's *Rare, Unusual and Significant Plants* publication to protect their local plants; Santa Clara Valley chapter volunteers annually monitor important rare plant populations; volunteers on San Diego and San Luis Obispo chapter field trips discover and assess important populations; and the list of rare plant volunteer work from CNPS chapters goes on and on.

WHAT IS CNPS DOING TODAY?

In addition to the ongoing highly successful efforts described above, we are expanding our work to protect rare plants and rare places. We are engaging new volunteers in targeted efforts to collect urgently needed rare plant information. We are also working with partner organizations to protect other species.



Kim Clark

Sand food *(Pholisma sonorae)* was an important food source for Native Americans, and is now endangered due to loss of habitat from off-road vehicles, military activities, and non-native plants.

The Rare Plant Treasure Hunt is an exciting partnership between the CNPS Education Program and the CNPS Rare Plant Program. Treasure Hunts train chapters and volunteers to collect up-to-date information on our state's rare plant populations, many of which have not been seen in decades. This initiative provides valuable data to the CNPS Rare Plant Program and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Treasure Hunters can join an organized rare plant search listed on the CNPS website, or can request that a search be scheduled for their chapter. Recently, CNPS has also teamed up with the California Lichen Society and Calflora to add rare lichens to the *CNPS Inventory*.

While we are working hard today, we are also working hard for tomorrow. The plants we study and protect will need committed stewards for years to come, and so CNPS is striving to engage and train a new generation of California rare plant scientists. As always, CNPS is providing education grants to students in chapters across the state. Thanks to a kind donor, we are also able to provide support for graduate students at Claremont Graduate University who are developing conservation plans for rare plants. (See story on page three of this issue about educational grants to students.)

SOME ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

We welcome your involvement in this stimulating and satisfying work! There are many actions you can take:

- Rare Plant Treasure Hunts need your help. Please join a trip, or work with your chapter to plan one.
- Help us develop a speakers bureau to bring rare plant talks to your chapter.
- Develop a list of local plants or profiles of rare plant communities in your area.
- Work with your chapter's rare plant chair on conservation and advocacy activities.
- Help us to develop and share one-page profiles of rare plants, including species saved from extinction, locally rare species, and useful rare plants.
- Contribute to the CNPS Rare Campaign at http://cnps.org/donate.

Sandy McCoy is CNPS Development Consultant. **Bob Hass** is editor of the *CNPS Bulletin* and *Fremontia*.

Native Plant Gardens

CNPS Member: Alison Shilling

[Editor's Note: This is the first of what we hope will be many brief articles in this newsletter about CNPS members' native plant gardens. We hope it inspires you to send us an article of 575–600 words and a couple of dynamite photos of your own garden. Send submissions to Susan Krzywicki at susankrzywicki@mac.com, and Bob Hass at bhass@cnps.org.]

When I bought my Davis house in 2008 I was, perversely, rather pleased that the yard in the front had pathetic unpruned bushes and a ratty lawn (fortunately not Bermuda grass). I was able without remorse to simply pull out the bushes and have the lawn tilled under. I dug an imitation stream and lined it with river rocks, and added a few rocks for interest in the pancake-flat area, finding that pumice boulders were light enough for me to move around without help.

My previous yard in Southern California had plenty of room for anything I wanted to grow. So even though I knew, intellectually, the limitations of this suburban yard, I found myself indulging in one or more of each of my favorite chaparral and sage scrub plants.

This worked out well with the herbaceous perennials. For the most part they are flourishing but know their place: coral bells (*Heuchera* spp.) and columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*) in the shade next to the house, and sages (*Salvia* spp.), penstemon, and fall-flowering fuchsia (*Epilobium* spp.) in the sun.

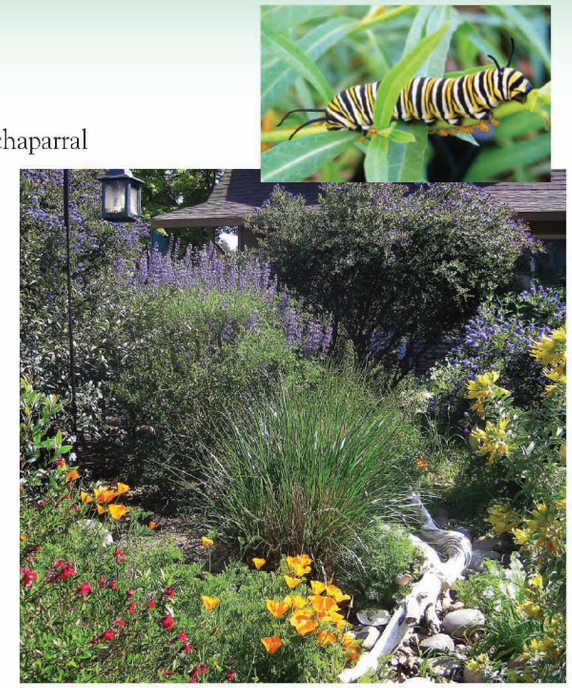
My soil is the kind of clay that turns into bricks at the drop of a hat, and the tap water is high in dissolved solids, in particular selenium which, people assure me, is death on plants. In fact, some Central Valley shrubs, such as the silver bush lupine and the monkeyflower, do not seem happy.

As soon as I planted the chaparral plants, however, they relished the conditions. Coffeeberry (*Frangula californica*) and toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*) sprouted vigorously, and the ceanothus 'Concha' (why did I plant three of them?), which after ten years in Southern California were six feet tall, here in Davis require repeated pruning to keep them to eight feet.

The native grape (*Vitis californica*) gets hacked back to a foot from the fence every fall, but I have to keep a stern eye on it, since it has lofty aspirations and will send tendrils up the grapefruit tree as soon as my back is turned.

Having a few spare inches of bare soil, I added a few grasses. There are so many variables amongst species that it was difficult deciding which to select. Besides size and color, some are summer or winter dormant, and the type and timing of the inflorescences varies considerably. My favorites are the giant wild rye (*Elymus condensatus* 'Canyon Prince'), a striking four-foot mound of stiff grey leaves; sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*), also grey, but small with gracefully curving leaves and flowers; as well as a sedge (*Carex praegracilis*), bright green, small, and shade-loving.

Our state grass, purple needlegrass (*Stipa pulchra*) and California melic (*Melica californica*) reseed freely but not wildly, which is rather nice. However, although both of these look beautiful in the spring, by summer they are sprawling and appear half dead. Oh, and one should take seriously the names of species: the one plant of creeping wild rye (*Elymus triticoides*) is running, rather than creeping, intent on covering the whole side yard.



Susan Krzywicki

Top: Monarch caterpillar competing with aphids for a milkweed feast. Bottom: Contrasting plant heights, colors, and textures draw one into the author's Davis garden and make you want to stay. It's a feast for the eyes. Both photos by Alison Shilling.

Birds love the coffeeberries and grapes (there are enough of these for me now, as well). Bees and the occasional hummingbird have nectar from February to November. The only "pests" that pose a problem are the yellow aphids which can, and have, killed a whole milkweed plant (*Asclepias fascicularis*). Daily blasts of water can control them, but not when a Monarch butterfly decides her young would love that very plant!

"Exuberant" is a charitable term for my yard; "overgrown" would be more accurate. My plants have obliterated any hint of a landscape design there might have been. However, the wildlife loves it, and sun, rain, and dew bring out the characteristic California smell of sage.

Alison Shilling has been a master gardener, and for 16 years has been speaking and writing on the pleasures and advantages of using California native plants in home gardens.

CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY
BULLETIN
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The California Native Plant Society is a statewide, nonprofit organization of amateurs and professionals with a common interest in learning about and preserving California's native plants and plant communities. Membership is open to all. Visit cnps.org

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Next Chapter Council Meeting

(Details available at: http://cnps.org/cnps/admin/cc/)

DECEMBER 6–8, 2013 – SEDGWICK RANCH, 35 MILES N. OF SANTA BARBARA, HOST CHAPTER: CHANNEL ISLANDS



SAVE THE DATE!

Connections:
Weeding With Cooperative Management

15th Annual Central California Invasive Weed Symposium

November 7th, 2013 - Paicines Ranch, Paicines, CA

Keynote Speaker: Ken Moore
Wildlands Restoration Team

$50 Early registration - $25 Students - $65 Late Registration

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