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CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

BULLETIN

New Invasive Aster in Mammoth Lakes

COULD HYBRIDIZE WITH LOCAL NATIVE SPECIES TO CREATE A "SUPER WEED"

By Ann Howald and Sherry Taylor

In late summer 2012 Bristlecone Chapter members noticed that a non-native "aster" was taking over a recently restored native landscape at the Cerro Coso College campus on the outskirts of the town of Mammoth Lakes. Taking immediate action to limit the plant's spread at the college and into adjacent native vegetation, volunteers, led by Sherry Taylor—a long-term resident of Mammoth Lakes and coordinator of the Bristlecone Chapter's Mammoth area plant sale—hand-pulled a dumpster-sized quantity of the invader.

Surveying other parts of Mammoth Lakes, Sherry noticed that the same plant had invaded roadsides and pockets of native sagebrush scrub. These areas included a ridge adjacent to the University of California's Valentine Camp in Old Mammoth. Fearing that the invasive plant could spread to Valentine Camp, a University of California (UC) Natural Reserve established to protect its natural habitats and native species, Sherry contacted Daniel Dawson, the reserve's resident director. Since all of UC's Natural Reserves have a mandate to protect native biodiversity, Dan alerted Valentine Camp's volunteer botanist and Bristlecone Chapter member Ann Howald.

Ann recognized the invasive aster as a likely member of the genus *Dieteria* (formerly *Machaeranthera*). Species in this genus are known commonly as tansy aster, hoary aster, Dieter's aster, and by other names. This was further cause for alarm, since Valentine Camp, the entire Mammoth Lakes region, and much of the Eastern Sierra support varieties of the *native* plant *Dieteria canescens*, or hoary aster. The concern was that a closely related non-native species of *Dieteria* could hybridize with the local native varieties of *Dieteria canescens*. Hybrids between natives and non-natives have the potential to become "super weeds" capable of outcompeting native species, not to mention confounding future taxonomists.

Those of us who loved the simple and easy-to-pronounce name "aster" have had to become aware that the most recent classification systems in *The Jepson Manual*, Second Edition, and the *Flora of North America*, do not include any members of the genus *Aster* as native to California. Aster has been relegated to the status of a common name for species now included in genera such as *Dieteria*, *Symphyotrichum*, *Oreostemma*, and the like.



Sherry Taylor

The non-native *aster Dieteria canescens* var. *canescens* invading disturbed area along Meridian Boulevard in the town of Mammoth Lakes.

(continued on page 6)

Native Here Nursery Champions Use of Locally Native Plants

By Charli Danielsen

[Editor's Note: Major staff changes at this well-known native plant nursery, situated in the city where CNPS first began, prompted this article.]

"Native Here" comes from the signs in botanic gardens when a plant is found native to the site rather than transported from another locale. In the mid 1980s, scientists within CNPS began noticing hybridization taking place in the wild between wild and garden plants. The organization developed policies about using only locally native plants in revegetation and restoration.

Charli Danielsen, being a person who likes simple solutions, felt that the simplest way to avoid unwanted hybridization would be to grow plants from local sources in sufficient quantities to meet revegetation and restoration needs, and to encourage gardeners to avoid using plants from other locales that could hybridize with the local native populations. So

(continued on page 6)



From the Executive Director

Not to be missed: the 2015 CNPS Conservation Conference

It must be said: I am really looking forward to the big 2015 CNPS Conservation Conference! It's going to be an amazing event, with hundreds of your friends presenting the latest research, thousands of attendees exchanging ideas and smiles, and an abandoned disco club that we get to use for our 50th birthday party.

I have had the good fortune to attend previous editions of the Conservation Conference (I still get a nice "endorphin memory" when I recall the beautiful photos that graced the 2009 Baja sessions), but it is also quite an experience watching organizers bring the conference together. It's inspiring to see all the dedication and creativity: conference volunteers are bringing fresh ideas such as "lightning talks;" sponsors are already getting in touch with offers of support; chapters are exploring ways to bring even more student attendees. Dozens of the smartest people I know are working hard to make it an absolutely unforgettable conference, and it looks like they're going to succeed!

Of course, the conference is much more than the overload of 200-plus stimulating talks. It's a once-every-three-years chance for us all to join together and exchange perspectives. It is a special gathering that unites our Society, a cross pollination in which assumptions are tested, new ideas are born, friends are made and partnerships started, projects proposed and initiatives advanced. We will talk about plans and dreams and aspirations, and then head back home to change the world for the better.

You have probably heard it already, and you'll hear it again: this conference will kick off a year-long celebration of one of California's most effective conservation organizations. It begins the 50th birthday party of CNPS, the Society that with your help saves the beautiful places you love. The conference is on my mind, on the mind of a hundred busy volunteers, and hopefully now on your mind as well.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Dan Gluesenkamp
Executive Director

The Rewards of Volunteering

I'm inspired and humbled by the incredible volunteers we have in CNPS, and I'm honored to be one of the many. From plant sale stalwarts, to rare plant treasure hunters, to chapter officers, to our state board and committees, we spend our free time working collaboratively to educate others about native plants and to protect them. We testify, we organize, we write, we represent, we donate, we plant, and we do so much more. Together we speak with a powerful voice and an important message.



Laura Camp

The new CNPS Board of Directors, plus CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp (third from right).

I encourage you to reflect for a moment about your volunteer time with CNPS. Do you want to become more active? Do you have a new challenge or idea in mind? Are you ready to inspire the next generation of volunteers and leaders? Check in with your local chapter and find your passion. Whether you give one hour or many weeks of your time, CNPS will give back to you and will enrich your life with fellowship, beauty, growth, and accomplishment.

Laura Camp, President
CNPS Board of Directors

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CNPS 2015 Conservation Conference

Call for abstracts and workshops now open

The CNPS 2015 Conservation Conference will be held January 13–17, 2015, at the San Jose DoubleTree by Hilton, San Jose, California. The first two days of the conference will be filled with workshops and field trips, followed by three days of scientific conference sessions. We expect over 1,000 attendees including academic and field professionals from the various disciplines related to plant conservation, as well as experienced volunteers. Go to www.cnps.org/2015 for up-to-date information.

The **Call for Abstracts** for oral and poster presentations for the conference is open until July 10, 2014. Guidelines and directions for submissions may be found on the conference website under Call for Abstracts at www.cnps.org/2015/abstracts. All abstracts must be submitted electronically through the CNPS website, as directed. Descriptions of sessions, including a new lightning talk format, may be found at www.cnps.org/2015/sessions.

All presenters, including contributing and invited speakers and poster presenters, must submit an abstract. Students are also encouraged to submit abstracts for one of the topic sessions, the special student session titled "Current Research," or the poster session.

The **Call for Workshops** is open and accepting proposals until May 1. Proposals for workshops should be sent electronically by May 1, 2014 to workshops@cnps.org. For proposal guidelines, please go to www.cnps.org/2015/workshops. Half-day, one-day, or two-day workshops may be scheduled. Workshops should teach job skills and/or cover one of the following topics: environmental laws and regulations, botanical field methods, plant taxonomy, vegetation ecology, restoration, horticulture, ethnobotany, drawing from nature, gardening with native plants, or plant/animal relationships.

Josie Crawford, CNPS Education Program Director

Roxanne Bittman Honored

Receives 2013 CNPS Agency Personnel of the Year Award

BY DIANA HICKSON

Roxanne Bittman has been awarded the 2013 Agency Personnel of the Year Award from CNPS. She recently retired from her position as lead scientist for the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB). She worked for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (formerly Fish and Game) for 21 years, and prior to that for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) for 10 years.

At TNC she worked to preserve Calhoun Cut in Solano County and Semitropic Ridge in Kern County. Now ecological reserves, these properties support populations of many rare plants.

At CNDDB she helped guide the program through technological changes from a paper-based inventory to the Web application it is today. Over the years, she has been the person who has done the most toward working with data providers, users, and stakeholders to make CNDDB available to people while maintaining the accuracy of the data as submitted. More recently, she has been actively involved in creating a Web application for accepting field survey data.



Diana Hickson

Roxanne Bittman

Roxanne has repeatedly promoted the close collaboration between the CNPS Rare Plant Program and the CNDDB, and the methodology of ranking rare plants when it has been questioned by industry or by state administrators. Her extensive knowledge of both the history and workings of the collaboration put the challengers at ease.

The fact that six current and past CNPS rare plant botanists sent in statements highly complimentary of her work speaks to Roxanne's steadfast commitment to scientific rigor and conservation of the state's rare plants.

Diana Hickson is a senior environmental scientist with the CDFW.

Recycling Old Issues of CNPS Publications

What do you do with your old issues of *Fremontia* and the *CNPS Bulletin*? You might use them to brighten up a dentist's or doctor's waiting room! Many members have joined CNPS after reading issues left by a considerate member such as you. Please scratch out your name and address, then leave old issues where others may discover them.

CHAPTER NEWS

DOROTHY KING YOUNG CHAPTER:
The Rare Campaign at Sea Ranch

[Editor's Note: This article was adapted from one published in the Summer 2013 issue of Sea Ranch Soundings.*]*

CNPS and the community of Sea Ranch, located in northern Sonoma County on the Pacific Coast, are both approaching their 50th anniversaries. In the Dorothy King Young (DKY) Chapter's southern area, members who live at Sea Ranch have been working on conserving rare species. Some of them are quite common here at Sea Ranch, but not elsewhere.



California Rare Plant Rank 1B species that the DKY Chapter has been documenting and protecting. Clockwise from top left: perennial goldfields *(Lasthenia macrantha* subsp. *macrantha),* swamp harebell *(Campanula californica),* supple fleabane *(Erigeron supplex),* coast lily *(Lilium maritimum).* All photographs by Mary Hunter.

For many years, local members Mary Hunter and Lynn Tuft have been working on finding and documenting these plants, so that populations may be observed over time and protected when possible. All of these are California Rare Plant Rank 1B species—rare throughout their range with the majority endemic to California.

At the top of the Sea Ranch list is a bulb that is seriously threatened in California, coast lily *(Lilium maritimum)*. There are also eight species found at Sea Ranch that are fairly threatened in California. They include Blasdale's bentgrass, *(Agrostis blasdalei)*; coastal bluff morning glory *(Calystegia purpurata* subsp. *saxicola)*; swamp harebell *(Campanula californica)*; supple daisy *(Erigeron supplex)*; pale yellow hayfield tarplant *(Hemizonia congesta* subsp. *congesta)*; perennial goldfields *(Lasthenia macrantha* subsp. *macrantha)*, which was found by Mary Hunter as a new local species two years ago; Point Reyes checkerbloom *(Sidalcea calycosa* subsp. *rhizomata)*; and purple-stemmed checkerbloom *(Sidalcea malviflora* subsp. *purpurea)*.

Barbara Rice is working with a volunteer group to take GPS readings to document the current locations of these rare populations in The Sea Ranch Association GIS system. She is also writing articles for the Sea Ranch monthly and quarterly publications to educate local residents about the need for protection of these species. In addition, we are preparing a reference page for the Sea Ranch website. We hope that our local rare plant efforts will serve as a baseline document for future native plant lovers, especially in regard to climate change.

Barbara Rice, Member at Large

Breaking News!

CNPS is currently celebrating the Rare Campaign for rare plants and places. Recently, an anonymous donor made a $27K contribution with the request that the gift be matched! You can help by contributing online at http://CNPS.org/support or by mail to 2707 K Streeet #1, Sacramento, CA 95816. For additional ideas on ways to support the Campaign, see the Oct.–Dec. 2013 issue of the *CNPS Bulletin*.

SOUTH COAST CHAPTER:
Generous donation to Horticulture Program

At the December 2013 Chapter Council Meeting, the South Coast Chapter presented a $10,000 donation to the CNPS Horticulture Program. The chapter, which covers the southern part of Los Angeles County and the southern Channel Islands, donated the money to welcome the new director and inspire others to support the Program.

This contribution was funded from a bequest from one of the South Coast Chapter's founding members, Elaine Conze. The gift was unexpected and is greatly appreciated because it demonstrates the interest that so many chapters have in the gardening aspects of native plants. The chapter hopes this will encourage other chapters, individuals, and supporters to donate as well. Already the Marin Chapter has voted to contribute toward matching this important gift!

Please get in touch with CNPS Executive Director Dan Gluesenkamp if you have ideas for how best to maximize this contribution.



David Magney

Chapter President David Berman presenting $10,000 check to new CNPS Horticulture Program Director Susan Krzywicki.

Volunteer Recognition Award

CNPS regularly recognizes members for outstanding contributions to the preservation and appreciation of California's native flora through its Volunteer Recognition Award. CNPS is grateful for all these volunteers have done. The latest CNPS members to receive this award are Denise Polk and Andrea Adams-Morden.



Jackie Pascoe

Denise Polk

Denise Polk is being honored for over 20 years of dedicated service to the Santa Cruz County Chapter. Since 1992 she has managed the chapter's plant propagation program, including the training of volunteers, many of whom are now expert propagators themselves. It now takes a committee to do all that Denise had been doing to run this crucial program. She has also actively promoted CNPS activities at many local events and in the orchid society. Denise is well-known for going about her work quietly and without fanfare, and for her warmth and wonderful smile.



Bruce Morden

Andrea Adams-Morden

Andrea Adams-Morden was recognized for many years of service to CNPS, the Channel Islands Chapter, and other worthy organizations. Of special note have been her efforts to expand CNPS activity in the Santa Barbara-Carpinteria area, resulting in the resumption of bimonthly chapter meetings at the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden (SBBG). Since 2011 she also began coordinating chapter field trips. Her efforts have increased CNPS visibility in the area and attracted numerous new members. She has also been an active volunteer with SBBG, and has represented CNPS in other organizations, including Cal-IPC and SERCAL.

Charles Blair, Chair
Volunteer Recognition Committee

In Appreciation: Beatrice Elvin Brown

Giving back with a bequest

Beatrice Elvin Brown was, as her lawyer remarked, "an incredibly conscientious person." This became clear when a generous contribution of $56,000 was distributed from her estate to CNPS in late 2013.

Bei, as she was known in the community, led volunteer hikes in Tilden Park in Berkeley, monitored the owl population at Berkeley Marina, and was a docent at the Oakland Museum. According to a family friend, she got involved with native plants largely through her artwork. Her colored pencil drawings were on display at the El Cerrito Annual Art Show and Sale, in many local cafes, and exhibited in a special showing at the Nature Center in Tilden Park. In fact, in addition to leaving CNPS a portion of her estate in a bequest, she also left many of her botanical drawings to the East Bay Chapter.

She explained her reasons for making generous donations from her estate to her four most beloved organizations:

I have…decided to share my estate… with associations that have given me so much pleasure during my lifetime. The East Bay Regional Parks, especially Tilden Park, the Golden Gate Audubon, the California Native Plant Society, and the Oakland Museum of California are the organizations I belong to….These organizations devote much of their efforts and resources to help preserve the green places of this area for future generations. They all have provided me with places to go when my soul was weary—places to see the things I love—birds, flowers, trees, fresh air, and a place to meet and walk and talk with my friends. These organizations have given so much to me that I want to show my family my appreciation and support for these organizations.



Through her thoughtful bequest to CNPS, Bei's legacy will live on.

Stacey Flowerdew, Membership and Development Coordinator

New Invasive *(from page 1)*

Identifying an invasive plant can be a challenge, since its native habitat and range aren't immediately clear, and it may be a plant from the horticulture trade that is an unusual variant of a native species, or even a hybrid form. Ann collected voucher specimens of the invader, reviewed their characteristics, and used the extensive collection of *Dieteria* specimens at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden Herbarium in an attempt to narrow the invasive *Dieteria*'s identity. A specimen of the plant was sent to Dr. Ronald Hartman, curator of the Rocky Mountain Herbarium at the University of Wyoming in Laramie, and an expert on the genus *Dieteria*. Dr. Hartman identified the invader as *Dieteria canescens* var. *canescens*, a surprising and confusing result because this is the same variety of *Dieteria canescens* that is native to the Mammoth Lakes area.

Dr. Hartman explained that the plants invading Mammoth Lakes are native to western Wyoming and the Great Basin, but not to California. Variety *canescens*


Steve Matson


Steve Matson


Sherry Taylor


Richard Spellenberg

The native variety of hoary aster *(Dieteria canescens var. canescens)*, (close-up and full plant, left) differs from its highly invasive non-native cousin (right).

is the most widespread and diverse of all ten varieties of *Dieteria canescens*, which explains how the invader can look so different from the native, even though they are the same variety. The invader is an annual or biennial, has many large flowering heads with dark purple rays, and branches profusely from the upper stems. The native is a semi-woody short-lived perennial, has fewer, smaller heads with light purple rays, and branches mainly from the base. Similar phyllaries (bracts at the base of the flower heads), stem hairs, and seeds are what unite these very different looking plants into the same variety of *Dieteria canescens*.

In 2013 the invasive *Dieteria* was found throughout Mammoth Lakes, in spite of low rainfall. Ann surveyed Valentine Camp and adjacent habitat areas and found no trace of the plant—at least not yet, although she observed it within a quarter-mile of Valentine Camp. Additional plants were pulled by Sherry and others at Cerro Coso College. They found fewer than in 2012.

Plans for 2014 include a more comprehensive effort to contain the plant's spread within the town of Mammoth Lakes, and surveys in the Mammoth Lakes Basin and on Mammoth Mountain to determine whether it has spread beyond the town.

Ann Howald is a retired botanist with a special interest in invasive plants, and has been studying the flora of Mono County for many years. **Sherry Taylor** is an outdoor science teacher at the Valentine Reserve, and coordinated a student restoration project at Cerro Coso College through a grant from the Bristlecone Chapter.

Native Here *(from page 1)*

she began growing plants for projects using only natives local to the project sites at Design Associates Working With Nature (DAWN) at the Berkeley Marina.

DAWN closed in 1992, and gave its remaining plant stock to the East Bay Chapter of CNPS. Benches, plant storage structures, and an office shed were dismantled and stored at a site in Tilden Park where a new CNPS-sponsored nursery was planned, while contract negotiations went on between CNPS and the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD). The site had been designated in the park's master plan as a place where native plants would be propagated. Things moved a lot faster once it was discovered that EBRPD and CNPS used the same insurance underwriter.

Native Here Nursery opened to the public in 1994 as a project of the East


Janice Bray

Smiles all around because retiring long-time Native Here Nursery staff Charli Danielsen (center left) and Margot Cunningham (far left) know they are leaving things in the capable hands of their younger replacements, Theo Fitanides (center right) and Adam Huggins (far right).

Bay Chapter of CNPS. It is dedicated to growing plants propagated from seeds collected in Alameda and Contra Costa counties for restoration and gardening projects. Anyone may purchase plants and customers range from "backyard restorationists" through landscapers and local restoration groups to State and Regional Parks restoration projects.

Charli Danielsen, volunteer nursery manager, and Margot Cunningham, sales manager, both retired from their responsibilities at Native Here Nursery at the end of 2013. Danielsen had worked at the nursery for over 20 years, and Cunningham for 13 years! The new nursery manager, Theo Fitanides, was hired in September 2013 and assumed full responsibility for nursery operations at the start of 2014. Adam Huggins was hired as inventory specialist. Volunteers, essential to the nursery from its beginning, continue to work with the part-time staff.

Charli Danielsen is outgoing manager of Native Here Nursery, a past president of CNPS, and an active long-time member of the East Bay Chapter of CNPS.

Native Plant Gardens of CNPS Members

David and Carolyn Long, Mill Valley, CA

This magical, virtually 100% California native hillside garden on a typical suburban lot in Mill Valley (Marin County) is sectioned into different habitats that include riparian/woodland slope, coastal shrub, dry meadow, sedge transition meadow, hedgerow, and chaparral. It was added to an existing front yard garden that has a more Asian feel and features boulders, a pond and waterfall, Japanese maples, as well as some native plants.

This garden includes almost 200 native plants, most local to Marin County, and demonstrates how they can be used to create a beautiful and diverse garden landscape. These include manzanitas (*Arctostaphylos* spp.) and wild lilac (*Ceanothus* spp.) that grow only in Marin or in a few other places.

In some quarters, California native plants have an undeserved reputation for being fussy and slow-growing. This garden was put in eight years ago using mostly one gallon stock. Our plants have grown to be large and robust, without the need for regular applications of fertilizer.

One of the joys in creating this native plant garden has been witnessing the return of beneficial insects and bees. California native bees flourish among the wide variety of flowering plants found in it. A good many are ground nesters, and parts of the garden are kept unmulched to promote bee nesting (this requires more weeding as a result). Many types of butterflies also visit the garden for nectar and larval plants. Insects, nectar, seeds, berries, and protective cover also attract a variety of birds, including nesting Bewick's Wrens, nesting Scrub Jays, Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, Wrentits, and Golden-Crowned Sparrows. Squadrons of dragonflies and violet-green swallows regularly patrol the yard in search of insects.



Dry creek bed with riparian vegetation and blooming western azalea. Both photographs by the author.

A pathway of crushed decomposed lava rock connects the different sections of the garden. Its permeable surface absorbs rain, slows runoff from the property, and blends with surrounding plants and soil. The garden includes many areas with rock and wood crevices and hiding places. These provide habitat for garter snakes, western fence lizards, alligator lizards, and salamanders.

California live oaks (*Quercus agrifolia*) are excellent habitat trees, attracting a large number of insects and the resulting food chain. The two in our garden were planted by scrub jays, and perfectly flank the back deck of the house. Numerous other jay-planted oaks, pruned as shrubs, dot the garden.

A dry creek bed wandering down the slope was built to thematically connect the waterfall and pond in the front yard. A few of the many native riparian plants found in this area are scarlet monkeyflower (*Mimulus cardinalis*), red twig dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), creambush (*Holodiscus discolor*), elk's clover (*Aralia californica*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), California myrtle (*Morella californica*), leopard lily (*Lilium pardalinum*), false solomon seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), Pacific Coast irises (*Iris* spp.), and a variety of ferns and spring ephemeral species.



Meadow with blooming clarkia looking across path to coastal scrub (coast buckwheat, Sonoma sage, and coffeeberry).

A dry meadow featuring drought tolerant grasses, perennials, and a few shrubs is below the path at the back of the garden. It also features a variety of annual wildflowers that are sown annually to supplement those that reseeded from the previous year. Most showy are the clarkias that come in many shades of pink and red.

Drip irrigation is used throughout the garden except for the dry meadow. Irrigation cycles are less frequent than in past years and the chaparral and hedgerow areas have been completely weaned off of irrigation. Weeds love water, but as the natives have become more drought tolerant with maturity, weeds have been less of a problem. We hand pull any weeds that appear, and use no herbicides whatsoever.

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/)

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Photo of *Enceliopsis covillei*, the CNPS logo plant, by Steve Ingram at www.ingramphoto.com

www.cnps.org/2015

CNPS 2015 Conservation Conference

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