Strategies for Building Membership from the Redbud Chapter

Redbud Chapter comprises most of Placer and Nevada Counties

- Located east of Sacramento
- Elevations from 40 to 9,000 feet
- Habitats central valley grasslands to sub-alpine, near Lake Tahoe.
- Population of about 300,000 for the 2 counties.

Redbud Is A Small, Rural Chapter

- Large membership increases in recent years

- New members in double digit numbers:
  2006- 27; 2007- 48; 2008- 52; 2009- 31; 2010- 41

- Fifteen (15%) percent net membership increase in 2010

How does Redbud accomplish this?

Membership Co-chair

- Started at Spring 2005 Plant Sale

- Initial responsibility limited to maintaining database and printing labels for Newsletter.

- Picked up all responsibilities when co-chair resigned

- Learned what worked through experience

Plant Sales

Plant Sales

- Redbud has Spring and Fall Plant Sales, half day, at Sierra College, alternating between Nevada and Placer Counties

- Good selection of natives from nurseries

- Chapter activities supported by revenue from sales

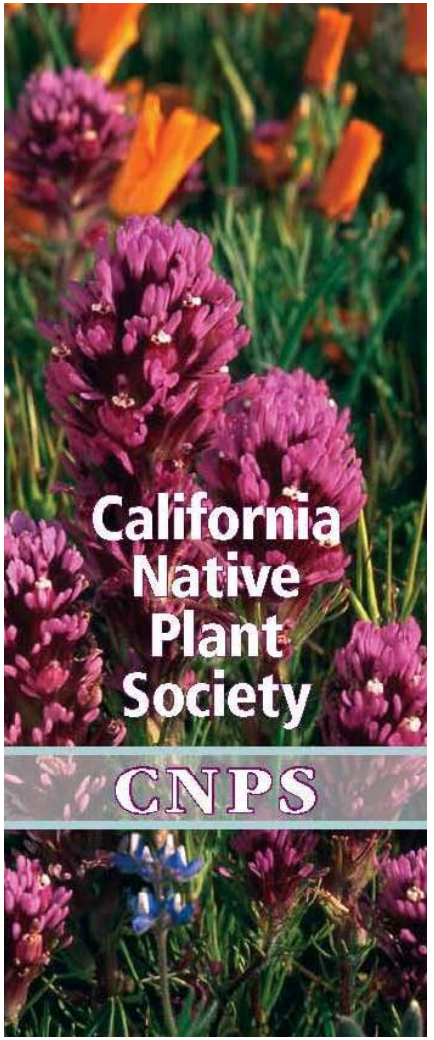
- Open to the public

- Ideal opportunity to solicit new members

- **Membership Application**

- Passive recruiting, applications on table - no results

- Add Newsletters, *Fremontias*- people took copies – no results



Welcome Greeting

Welcome Greeting

- Set up membership table near the plant sale entrance
- Greet new arrivals: “Welcome to our plant sale, thanks for coming. Are you familiar with our organization? We’re the California Native Plant Society . . .”
- Put a “smile” in your voice
- Develop a “pitch” you are comfortable with, and repeat it
- Keep talking to engage, close the sale
- Refer technical questions to expert members for answers

Literature

- Membership applications, current Redbud Newsletter, old *Fremontias*, Bulletins, Redbud insert for Membership Application with benefits listed
- Use Newsletter to point out upcoming hikes & programs
- Upright table sign with membership prices
- Redbud's Book *Wildflowers of Nevada and Placer Counties, California* Retail $29.95; chapter members get 15% discount
- Give everyone literature, even if they want to think about it

Ask If They Are Members

- It's hard for the non-sales people like me to "sell"
- Easier to *ask* if they are CNPS members; suggest they join
- Speak with enthusiasm about benefits; use "Wildflowers" book and Newsletter as sales tools; point out upcoming programs, hikes, wonderful, knowledgeable people to learn from

The Redbud "Brand"

The Redbud "Brand"

- *Create a sense that they're joining a friendly group*
- "Brand" the Redbud Chapter with our own graphic tee shirt, John Muir (Jack) Laws design jlaws@calacademy.org
- Sell Redbud tee shirts and tote bags, next to membership
- Hang examples to catch the eye, attract attention
- Work both tables, cross-market tees & memberships

“Free” With A New Membership

Add small free plants to membership table

Shoppers come over to see plants, end up buying a membership

CNPS State Promotions - Posters, Tote bags

Display so visible from a distance

Everyone loves getting something for “free”!

CNPS California Native Plant Society

Poster for Redbud Plant Sale

Advertising for Plant Sale

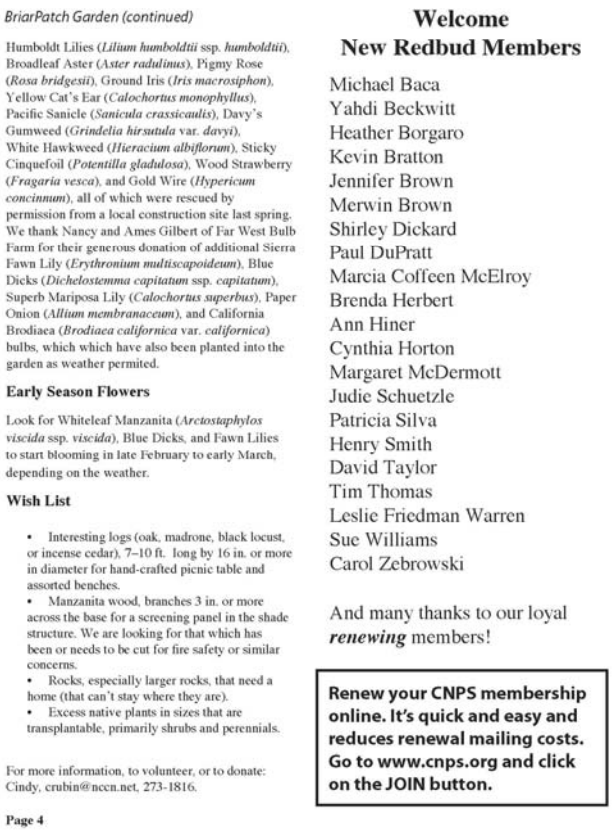
- Bilisoly Chapter Development Grant money used for publicity for Fall 2010 sale
- Redbud poster to advertise sale created by Christine Elder
  Website: www.christineelder.com /Phone: (530) 470-0784
- Ran three large ads in the gardening section of Nevada Union newspaper with poster image advertising the sale to get the word out to community
- Enthusiastic, large turnout for fall plant sale- lots of new members joined

Early Admission to Plant Sale for Members

- Fall 2010 plant sale was first time implemented
- Lots of early arrivals and high level of enthusiasm
- Plan to continue doing early admission for members, join at the door
- Roped off the area with yellow CAUTION tape, allow only a single entrance, bring current membership list to check

Contact New & Lapsed Members

- Membership co-chair telephones lapsed members
- Acknowledge new members by name in Redbud Newsletter
- Welcome new members when they join



BriarPatch Garden (continued)

Humboldt Lilies (*Lilium humboldtii* ssp. *humboldtii*), Broadleaf Aster (*Aster radulinus*), Pigmy Rose (*Rosa bridgesii*), Ground Iris (*Iris macrosiphon*), Yellow Cat's Ear (*Calochortus monophyllus*), Pacific Sanicle (*Sanicula crassicaulis*), Davy's Gumweed (*Grindelia hirsutula* var. *davyi*), White Hawkweed (*Hieracium albiflorum*), Sticky Cinquefoil (*Potentilla gladulosa*), Wood Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), and Gold Wire (*Hypericum concinnum*), all of which were rescued by permission from a local construction site last spring. We thank Nancy and Ames Gilbert of Far West Bulb Farm for their generous donation of additional Sierra Fawn Lily (*Erythronium multiscapoideum*), Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma capitatum* ssp. *capitatum*), Superb Mariposa Lily (*Calochortus superbus*), Paper Onion (*Allium membranaceum*), and California Brodiaea (*Brodiaea californica* var. *californica*) bulbs, which which have also been planted into the garden as weather permited.

Early Season Flowers

Look for Whiteleaf Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos viscida* ssp. *viscida*), Blue Dicks, and Fawn Lilies to start blooming in late February to early March, depending on the weather.

Wish List

- Interesting logs (oak, madrone, black locust, or incense cedar), 7–10 ft. long by 16 in. or more in diameter for hand-crafted picnic table and assorted benches.
- Manzanita wood, branches 3 in. or more across the base for a screening panel in the shade structure. We are looking for that which has been or needs to be cut for fire safety or similar concerns.
- Rocks, especially larger rocks, that need a home (that can't stay where they are).
- Excess native plants in sizes that are transplantable, primarily shrubs and perennials.

For more information, to volunteer, or to donate: Cindy, crubin@nccn.net, 273-1816.

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Welcome
New Redbud Members

Michael Baca
Yahdi Beckwitt
Heather Borgaro
Kevin Bratton
Jennifer Brown
Merwin Brown
Shirley Dickard
Paul DuPratt
Marcia Coffeen McElroy
Brenda Herbert
Ann Hiner
Cynthia Horton
Margaret McDermott
Judie Schuetzle
Patricia Silva
Henry Smith
David Taylor
Tim Thomas
Leslie Friedman Warren
Sue Williams
Carol Zebrowski

And many thanks to our loyal ***renewing*** members!

Renew your CNPS membership online. It's quick and easy and reduces renewal mailing costs. Go to www.cnps.org and click on the JOIN button.

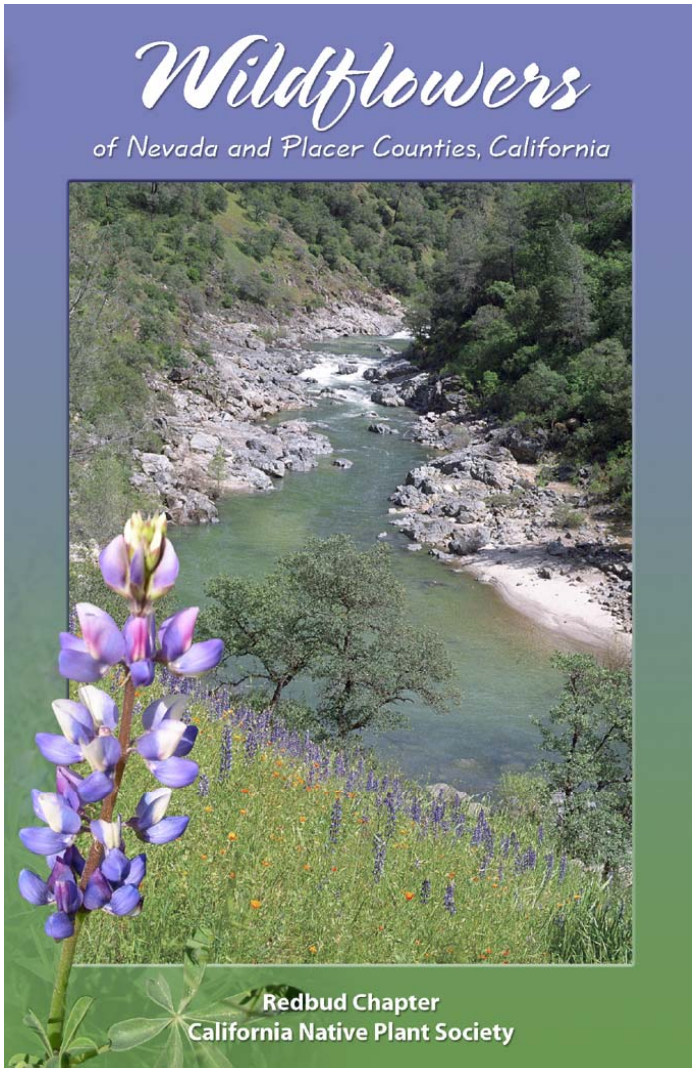
CNPS Membership Ideas Handbook

- Field Trips - have membership application forms available

- Evening programs - make announcement

- Other ideas in the Membership Handbook compiled by Arvind Kumar and others in 2007, available under "Admin" on CNPS website

Writing the Book



Why did we write the book?

Swainson Reserve vernal pools near Lincoln, Placer County

Why did we write the book?

Confronted with many conservation issues in our area, we saw a definite need for general education of the public and support for preservation.

Don't we need to do some more basic public education about the value of our flora? Isn't conservation more than just reacting to the latest golf course development that threatens acres of vernal pools or commercial expansion that will destroy the flora found on serpentine outcrops?

Organization of the Wildflower Book

Decisions, decisions!

- Organize by plant families versus flower color
- Wanted emphasis on plant habitats.
- Which species to describe of the 2,500 species found in our area and their common names?
- Lower elevations where most development occurs, below 3,000 feet.
- Include weeds and non-natives
- The plant list comprehensive list for 2 counties

The Book Project Grew and Grew

• Originally an innocent idea of writing a simple local wildflower guide, using photographs of the plants accompanied by brief descriptions

• We wanted to create a beautiful book that would immediately appeal to newcomers, homeowners, teachers, hikers, and everyone with an interest in the Sierra Nevada.

• Final book (2007) has 480 pages, 620 photos.

• The book was designed by Cindy Rubin (Harmony Works) and the computer file manager was Bill Wilson.

Authors, Photographers & Marketers

Writing the book was an all-volunteer project including:

- 13 authors, 16 photographers, and a group who organized the book marketing

- Book took almost 10 years of group effort to complete

- We have sold about 3,000 of the 4,000 copies printed.

Field Trips!

Redbud field trip, Sagehen Creek Meadow, Tahoe National Forest

Field Trips

Redbud Chapter Field Trip at Hell's Half Acre, Nevada Co.

Field trips are a popular CNPS activity

We included "Places to see Wildflowers" section in the book

Described 21 mostly easy trails that feature interesting plants and places

Book used on organized Redbud field trips

Redbud “Rainwalk” Field Trip, Independence Trail, Nevada Co.

Redbud Chapter Field Trip on Mt. Judah Trail, Tahoe National Forest

Next Redbud Book Underway

- Editors starting second Redbud book - *Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Nevada and Placer Counties*
- Proceeds from the sales of the Wildflower Book have generated printing funds for next book
- Our Chapter has funds from the book publishing for conservation projects contributing to vegetation study and Land Trust acquisition.

Questions or Comments?