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:

• 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](mailto: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”!
Poster for Redbud Plant Sale

Fall Native Plant Sale

Sierra College, Grass Valley
Saturday, September 18th
9:30AM-1:30PM

Highlights:
- Free admission
- Expert advice on gardening with natives
- Huge selection of native plants for sale
- Books, posters, note cards, t-shirts & totebags

New this Year:
- Free totebag for new members
- Early 8:30AM admission for CNPS members only—Join at the door for early admission

Directions: From Hwy 49 northbound, take Brunswick Rd. exit. Turn left on Brunswick. At second signal turn left on East Main (Nevada City Hwy). At the next signal turn right on Sierra College Drive. Entrance to the college is the first right off the roundabout. Go up hill and follow signs to plant sale.

More info: Roger at (530) 265-4173 | www.redbud-cnps.org

Illustration & Design by Christine Estler
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

Welcome New Redbud Members

Michael Baca
Yahdi Beckwitt
Heather Borgaro
Kevin Bratton
Jennifer Brown
Merwin Brown
Shirley Dickard
Paul Dzpatt
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.


• 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 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

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